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THE MAKING OF THE WESTERN MIND

THE WEST FRONT OF THE PARTHENON
(Photographed from within the colonnade, Athens)

THE MAKING OF THE WESTERN MIND

A SHORT SURVEY OF EUROPEAN CULTURE

BY

F. MELIAN STAWELL

AND

F. S. MARVIN

WITH 12 ILLUSTRATIONS

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" The soul has that measureless pride which consists in never acknowledging any lessons but its own. But it has sympathy as measureless as its pride, and the one balances the other, and neither can stretch too far while it stretches in company with the other. The inmost secrets of art sleep with the twain."

WALT WHITMAN.

PREFACE

THE authors of this little treatise are in general agreement with one another. Each, however, is only responsible for certain parts, to wit, F. S. Marvin for the two chapters on Science and the concluding chapter on Recent Developments; F. Melian Stawell for the rest, as well as for the choice of illustrations, the chronological table, and the translations in the book, unless otherwise stated.

Warm thanks are due to G. Lowes Dickinson, C. R. L. Fletcher, Baron Fr. von Hügel, and Miss Elizabeth Levett for suggestive comment and criticism.

F. M. S.
F. S. M.

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THE MAKING OF THE WESTERN MIND

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

WE are living in an aftermath of war and revolution. The menacing features it would be foolish to deny, but it would be equally foolish, and more paralysing, to overlook the hopeful signs. Among these is surely the prevalent desire to study history on broader lines and with a spirit that shall be international as well as patriotic. The work for this book has been undertaken in the hope of serving that end by learning to understand better the main forces that have gone to build up European culture and the main contributions of Europe's different nationalities to the common stock in literature, science, politics, philosophy, religion, and art.

The effort brings home to the student, and very forcibly, the underlying unity that subsists between the nations of the West. Between all nations doubtless some unity is latent, but Europe and her children hold in common a peculiar and opulent inheritance, developed, even in the midst of incessant strife, by a common partnership. Nation has learnt from nation, and in the end all the great developments of European culture have been international.

To recognize this is not, however, to obliterate the national boundaries. On the contrary, as we study the complicated story of European civilization we can see how in the shelter of each nation distinctive types of excellence have been fostered,

and we come to feel that, even as each period in time seems to have its allotted task (a task that, once achieved, is never exactly repeated), so each nation that is a natural unity has been able to give, sooner or later, something to the world that no other could have done. In this light the desire to suppress any one people appears more than ever as a sin against mankind. What would the inheritance of Europe have been if Persia had crushed the Greeks? What would it be without mediæval Italy, and with no Dante? or without Spain of the Renaissance, and with no Cervantes, no Velazquez? Without Holland, and with no Rembrandt, no Declaration of Dutch Independence? Without Germany, and with no Bach, no Beethoven, no Goethe, no Kant?

The richness and complexity of history is too great to be summed up under any one formula, but, if history is intelligible at all, certain conclusions can and should be drawn. And a survey, impartial at least in desire, indicates that there are two chief factors making for all noble achievement in culture, one the love of liberty, the other the search for unity, and both of them are needed alike in thought and in practice. Neither liberty nor unity can, it is true, of themselves produce the vital element of genius. But without them genius withers. Either alone, it is true again, is incomplete without the other, while to combine both in a perfect harmony is an achievement, maybe, beyond the power of man. Yet it is an achievement at which he must aim or perish. These considerations will meet us again and again in our course, and the moral, that Europe must now set herself to gain at once greater liberty and greater unity, stares us in the face at the close.

Since the object of this attempt is to trace the chief threads in Europe's web of culture, it has been necessary to pass lightly over events military and political, and seek only to embody as succinctly as possible the main results accepted by most historians and essential for any understanding of European development in the matters of the mind.

The treatment is on the whole chronological, and an effort has been made never to forget that each stage in history has

in it something of unique value which we can learn to appreciate, and in that sense make our own, but which we cannot reproduce. We shall never build another Parthenon or write another *Divina Commedia*. Indeed, if we could, there would be less need to study and reverence the Past.

It will be convenient to follow the time-honoured division into Ancient, Mediæval, Renaissance, and Modern. No sharp-cut lines of demarcation are possible in history, but these titles mark fairly well the outstanding periods in European civilization. First, the long stretch from the dawn of regular history to the fall of the Roman Empire in the West, say from the latter half of the second millennium B.C. up to the sixth century A.D., roughly two thousand years in all, the period which saw not only the achievements of Greece, Palestine, and Rome, but also their stagnation and consequent submersion beneath the barbarian floods. Next, the thousand years or so onwards to and including the transitions of the sixteenth century and the seventeenth, beginning with the chaotic struggles of the new rising nations, followed by the first blossoming-time of romantic poetry and religious art, and merging, through unnumbered conflicts between nation and nation, city and city, Church and State, into the conscious grandeurs and crimes of the Renaissance, the conscious desire to recapture the Pagan freedom of thought, and then to go beyond it and conquer unknown worlds. Finally, our own modern period, the age of science and of experiment in all directions. The best hopes of this, the youngest birth of Time, are, as we have said, bound up with its power to appreciate the varied aspects of the three that went before, to realize the value of Europe's spiritual achievement in itself and to see that it is throughout a joint work wrought by many hands, on the basis of a common inheritance.

To the Mediævalists we are drawn by the faith, the fervent beauty, the picturesque splendour, the human love and tenderness that shine out, strangely and strongly, through their turbid and savage strife. But in other ways—ways equally important—we feel ourselves more at home in the

light of reason that shone for the ancient Greeks in Athens. In mediæval thought we are baffled again and again by sheer puerilities, but even where Plato and Aristotle are obviously in error, their errors are those of grown men trying to follow reason, and our own reason grows, not by sweeping that ancient work aside, but by working ourselves to find out where exactly it was at fault. With the men of that transition-time usually called the Renaissance, we are, not unnaturally, still more in sympathy, for they, like ourselves, felt the double attraction of the past and the future. Their age outdoes ours in its wealth of imaginative genius, but many of their problems were the same and much of their spirit. Their attitude to the past, for all its admiration, was not devotional, but critical, and even those who worshipped the classics hoped to go beyond them.

PART I.—ANCIENT

CHAPTER II

HELLENISM

THE glory of Greece may sometimes have been over-praised; but it is, if anything, scant praise to admit that the Greeks laid the foundations for all our intellectual growth, and laid them in liberty.

We do not know as yet at what date their Aryan [1] forefathers, splitting off presumably from the common family north of the Danube, found their way into the sunny peninsulas and islands of the Eastern Mediterranean. But it must have been at least well before the first millennium B.C., and from the first they must have been in contact with the highest civilizations then accessible to Europe, notably the Egyptian and the Cretan, and the latter may have been near akin to their own. In any case they made good use of their opportunities. It is a reasonable conjecture that as early as 900 B.C. they had produced the two epics at once the most human and the most poetic ever known, the epic of war and love and tragedy and a nation's doom in the Iliad, the epic of home and personal adventure and hard-won happiness in the Odyssey. Breadth of sympathy and delight in personal vigour are the leading notes in each, as characteristic as the superb sense of beauty and the swift and stately diction.

[1] We may use this name, old and convenient, if slightly inaccurate, for the common stock, probably situated between the Danube and the Baltic, speaking a common language, from whom sprang Hindus, Persians, Greeks, Italians, Celtiberians, Celts, Teutons, and Slavs.

No battle-poetry has ever been more magnificent than that of the Iliad, and yet, as Shelley said, the poet is never so truly himself as when he reaches "the high and solemn close of the whole bloody tale in tenderness and inexpiable sorrow." And both poems are marked in almost every canto by the spirit of free enterprise and free judgment. Kings and priests are reverenced, but no tyranny is tolerated; the men are taunted as "not men but women" if they submit tamely to wrong done in high places. Agamemnon must bow to the will of the army assembled in council; the son of Ulysses must prove himself fit for leadership before he can establish his right to be lord of his island.

The achievements from the eighth century onwards, after the opening of the classical period proper, are as closely bound up with liberty. It is from the city of Mitylene, struggling for self-government, that spring the songs of Sappho, intense and clear, perfect with the unforced perfection of flowers. It is to democratic Athens that we owe Tragedy, the "many-folded fires" of Æschylus,

> "the secret of the night
> Hid in the day-source,"

followed by the Sophoclean harmony of self-controlled sorrow and heroism, and the Euripidean passion of pity and indignation. It is to Athens that we owe Comedy, as it shines in the brilliant laughter of Aristophanes, often scurrilous but always searching, and lit, whenever he chose, by a radiance of choral song. Tragedies and comedies alike are aglow with the fire of freedom and the pride in the Demos of Athens. Jebb spoke of their language as "the voice of life," and such in truth it is, supreme in flexibility, vividness, melody, clear subtlety of suggestion and appeal. But let us add that it is also the voice of free life. That is as certain as that it has always been both the allurement and the despair of translators. It bears the stamp of the people who made it, alert, enterprising, unfettered. And while they were pouring out such treasures of literature they were also elaborating architecture, sculpture, painting. The Parthenon, even

in ruin and dismemberment, astounds us by its union of simplicity, massiveness, and rich restraint of ornament—the tall fluted columns, golden-white against the amethyst hills and the blue sea, bearing lightly the huge marble slabs and the low-pitched roof, unadorned except for the sculpture, in and below the eaves, of those lithe and stately figures, splendid in gracious realism and suavity of line, that speak for ever of Athens' confidence in herself and her ideal for those citizens of hers who were to be a law unto themselves.

Greeks showed the same fearlessness in plotting out the true methods of science and philosophy. Already in the sixth century Thales and other Ionians, while their coast of Asia Minor was still unenslaved by Persia, had made a momentous beginning in mathematics, speculated on a common physical basis for all matter, and dreamed of reaching a dominant point of view from which the entire world could be understood as one connected whole.

Pythagoras, a little later, migrating from Samos to the Greek colonies in Italy in order to escape the oncoming tyranny at home, won equal renown for his further discoveries in mathematics and for his foundation of an independent brotherhood with its own ideals of righteousness in life. Anaxagoras, later still, coming to an Athens that had won her liberty to the full, takes the bold step of recognizing Mind as the guiding principle in the universe. These three early thinkers may stand among many as examples of those Greeks who awakened in Europe the hope, common alike to science and philosophy, that certain intelligible principles could be found from which could be deduced as consequences the bewildering details of appearances.

That the Greeks did not fully realize the need for scientific experiment is true ; but the sagacity of their scientific hypotheses is often astounding. It may be enough to recall the anticipation of the atomic theory by Democritus, who argued that all the processes of nature were derived from the movements of minute particles through space.

Socrates, on the other hand, turning aside from such investigations as too remote from human life to be fruitful,

brought philosophy " into the market-place " by the fascination of his lovable and strenuous life, his devout and humorous search after clear thinking in all conduct, preaching valiantly, in season and out of season, the truth that " the life without thought was no life for man." And thus, more perhaps than any single teacher, he set free the mind of the common man. And if, in alarm, his beloved Athens put him to death, we ought to recognize with Hegel that his criticism was much too powerful and solvent to be merely " innocent." The man who could be satisfied with no second-hand definition of righteousness, who could not even rest in the answer that it was obedience to the will of the gods, shook to its foundations the fabric of Greek mythology and ritual. It was an unsound fabric, weak for all its charm, and the shaking was sorely needed; but we do less than justice either to Socrates or to his judges if we do not realize what the shock must have meant, and how it may have unsettled the looser minds. Liberty, like all great things, has its dangers. Moreover, it is clear that Athens repented of this, her almost solitary act of persecution. The disciples of Socrates were honoured for honouring their master, and Plato could safely put his name at the head of everything he wrote.

In the system of Plato and Aristotle—for in essentials the two philosophers had one system and the same—the search for satisfactory causes and definitions, inaugurated by the Ionians for physics, extended by Socrates to ethics, and pursued fearlessly with the free man's readiness to follow the argument wherever it might lead, culminated in the famous and fruitful doctrine of Ideas, the doctrine that every natural thing had a dominant character, its " Form " or " Idea," from which its distinctive behaviours were derived and by which they should be judged. The " form " was " natural " in the sense that it was not imposed simply from without. If we planted a wooden bed, writes Aristotle in his pithy way, and the wood could still grow, it would grow up not a Bed, but a Tree. To discover the fundamental Forms and trace their consequences and connexions was the prime business

RIDERS IN THE PARTHENON FRIEZE

(British Museum)

of thought, and the rules of the syllogism were framed with the express object of keeping the results clear. What Aristotle always demanded was not an "empty" syllogism but one where the "middle term" should register a genuine and vital link between the Idea and its further consequences. The stars, to paraphrase an instance of his own, are not distant because they twinkle; they twinkle because they are distant. Again to Aristotle, as to Plato, it was a corollary of man's Form that he should seek to follow Reason and live in harmony with his fellow-citizens. Therefore, only in a well-ordered State could man attain the true end of his being and a happiness worthy of himself. The State, said Aristotle, in a passage of permanent inspiration, may have been brought into being for the sake of life; it exists for the sake of the good life.

That the discovery of the true Forms meant long and patient search, observation as well as analysis, Aristotle knew well enough, and even Plato, though far less interested in science proper than Aristotle, points an argument by appealing to the scientific method of Hippocrates, who insisted, as one of the first principles of medicine, on the study of the human body and its natural functions.[1]

Further, in Plato and Aristotle, the orderly search for the Ideas was linked with a remarkable philosophy of religion. For the Ideas were conceived as good in themselves and as ultimately brought into operation by the desire of every natural thing to attain, so far as it could, a supramundane Goodness, to "copy," as they said, or to "share in," the Perfection of a Type existing, in some real but mysterious sense, beyond this manifest world, in "a Place above the Heavens," as Plato's eloquence phrased it, in the "Idea of Ideas" as Aristotle put it, the life of God, the desire of the world, the Point on which hung all the heavens and the earth. In man this effort towards Perfection involved the pursuit of a happiness that culminates in the Knowledge of Truth, his natural faculties being wrought into a harmony dominated by this. Aristotle's doctrine of "the golden mean" implied

[1] Phædo, 270 D.

not merely balance and limitation, but balance and limitation to serve this definite and sublime end.

But was man capable of such sublimity? Here the answer of the Greeks was at least doubtful and grew more and more despondent as the years went on. Faced with the baffling intricacy and evil of the physical and moral world, they could not shake off the suspicion of an irrational element in things that reason could never understand nor effort subdue. The apparent progress of the world at certain epochs might be balanced by recurrent cycles of decay. This doubt, paralysing as it was to the most characteristic part of their hopes, was deepened by the final political failure of their country, a failure disastrous enough, after its opening brilliance, to make any man lose heart. Their first triumphs in culture, after the bloom of the Epic, had been won in connexion with their resistance as freemen to the aggressive tyranny of the Persians (490–480 ff. B.C.), Aryans like themselves, though neither nation knew it, but Aryans who had built up a brilliant empire on the basis of despotism.

The history of Herodotus is planned to exhibit the clash of the opposing ideals and the deliberate choice between submission to a magnificent autocrat and loyalty to the laws and covenants agreed upon by equals. But, Persia once defeated, the cities and men who had stood side by side against her turned on each other in fratricidal conflicts, as needless as they were murderous. Their sense of unity was too weak, and the liberty they loved was too often only their own. Of all the conflicts the most tragic was the long Peloponnesian War, waged for nearly a generation between Athens and Sparta (431–404 B.C.), though recognized for the curse it was by many of Athens' clearest minds, by Thucydides its historian, by Euripides the poet, writing his most moving play of "The Trojan Women" immediately after the Athenian violation of Melos, even by the poet's inveterate critic Aristophanes, who strove to end it by kindly laughter. The comedy of Aristophanes called "The Peace-maker," *Lysistrata*, where valiant true-hearted women on either side, Athenian and Lacedæmonian, join together in an effort to save

Greece by withdrawing from all men until the foolish war is given up, strikes the reader through all its indecency and uproarious mirth as one of the most humane protests ever written against political madness. It was written in vain, but it is a deathless thing. The chorus, now fragmentary, with which it closes is among the most musical ever sung for us by " that graceless master of Attic grace."

" Suddenly out of the darkness
Flashes the golden mirth,
Aristophanes' song with its laughter and light,
And the cry for peace, for the union of old,
Athens and Sparta side by side,
Like gods defying the Persian host !
Women and love and the glory of old,
Let them end the weariful war !
Drown it in laughter, riot, and song,
Dance and hymn to the gods !
Athens, Sparta, sing to the gods !
As the Spartan maidens dance and sing
In the deep Eurotas vale.
Pure and holy and fair
The daughter of Leda moves in the dance,
Leads the dance like a fawn.
And summon her too, sing to her too,
The Warrior Maiden, the Lady of Might,
The Queen of the Brazen House !
. . . . . .
But the lovely song stops short,—broken and far away ! "

In the history of Thucydides—one of the earliest, and perhaps the greatest ever written—the tragedy is put before us with a many-sided terseness, an impartial sympathy too pregnant to err by over-simplification, too wisely modest to claim knowledge where knowledge was not, but philosophic enough to search for underlying causes and bold enough to state them when found. Thucydides saw and admired the admirable conception of civic life upheld by the Athenian Pericles, a life free, democratic, joyous, adorned by an art that was never luxurious and a culture never effeminate. But he saw also the narrowness of the Periclean imperialism : the hard conviction that " the School of Hellas " had the right to take the money of her allies—the Delian League that

had helped to defeat Persia—and use it for her own beautifying (the Parthenon was built with the funds), the right to push her own dominion and commerce at the expense of all her rivals. He shows us the web of good and evil further complicated not only by the selfishness of Sparta, confessedly oligarchic and militarist, but also and throughout Greece by the fierce quarrels everywhere between "oligarch" and "democrat," the "class-wars" of antiquity.

Thucydides rarely moralizes openly, but the sequence of his chosen facts utters moral after moral. The overwhelming defeat in Syracuse, for example, whither Athens had gone to plunder the rich Greek colonies of Sicily, follows, with the Nemesis of an Æschylean tragedy, straight on the arrogant cruelty with which she had crushed, immediately before, the innocent island of Melos that had only desired to stand neutral in the conflict. It was the prelude to the fall of Athens. From that fall, it is true, she recovered astonishingly. But neither she, nor Greece as a whole, ever recovered sufficiently to oppose a united front when Philip of Macedon and Alexander his son, men of an allied but rougher race, swept down from the North, following an age-long track, to substitute personal empire for the civic freedom so nobly attempted, and so ignobly defeated, by the Greeks themselves.

It is indeed most important to reiterate with Pindar that the Athenians had

> "laid the shining steps
> Of Freedom's temple."

After expelling kings and tyrants they had conceived and put into practice government by the majority of the full citizens, trusting first and foremost to free speech and persuasion; they elected their officials for limited terms, to be subject to impeachment when the term was over; they gave the plain citizen a controlling voice, not only in the Assembly, but in the jury-courts; and more than once they shared in noteworthy experiments towards federation. And they knew well what they were doing. It rings out, as we have said, from almost all their writing, and the thrill of it can be felt even through the imperfect medium of translation, the thrill of pride in

that ordered freedom which taught the citizen alike to command and to obey. Nor are the instances Athenian only. Herein Athens only emphasized what marked out the Greek in general from the barbarian. In Sparta itself, the most rigid of Hellenic States, there was nothing like irresponsible despotism. Sparta had her share in the tradition of the Homeric songs, where the scenes of debate are almost as stirring as the scenes of battle, and the shrewd old loyal swineherd, grumbling at the half-hearted work of the slaves, admits " that a man loses half his manhood when he falls into slavery." Herodotus the Ionian makes the exiled Spartan king tell the Persian Xerxes to his face what Lacedæmonian liberty could mean :

" No men are braver than the Spartans taken singly, and when they unite they are the noblest of mankind. For though they are free they are not free in all things : they have one master and that master is the Law, whom they fear far more than any of your subjects fear you " (vii. 104).

Or take the splendid answer of the same Spartans when Hydarnes the Persian envoy tried to win them over by fair promises :

" Hydarnes, in this matter you cannot give us counsel on equal terms. Slavery you understand, but you have no knowledge of freedom. Had you ever tasted its sweetness you would have bidden us fight for it, not with spears but axes " (vii. 135).

But Athens remains the leader. There is no wider sweep for the free spirit than the passionate outcry of Prometheus, the Liberator and Friend of Man, presented by Æschylus at the opening of the drama chained to his lonely cliff, silent before the minions of Zeus, but appealing when rid of them to the elemental powers of Nature as witnesses to the wrong he suffers from the Rulers whose equal he is and who ought to be his allies :

> " O sacred sky, and swift-plumed flying winds,
> Ye river-founts, and sparkling from the sea
> Unnumbered laughters ! Earth, mother of us all !
> All-seeing Sun ! I call on you, on you !
> See what I suffer, I a god, from gods ! "

It was an appeal to echo down the centuries and inspire more than one poem in our own days—the Release of Man in Shelley's "Prometheus Unbound," the apostrophe to Liberty in Coleridge's "Ode to France":

> "O ye loud Waves, and O ye Forests high,
> And O ye Clouds that far above me soared!
> Thou rising Sun! thou blue rejoicing Sky!
> Yea, everything that is and will be free!"

The same note is repeated again and again throughout the play and taken up with exquisite effect at the close by the gentle, lovely daughters of Ocean, when the lackey of Zeus suggests that they should desert the Benefactor before the thunderous onslaught of the Tyrant:

> "Choose other words for us,
> Give other counsel,
> Then we may listen!
> Never to this!
> Play the coward, thou hintest?
> Nay, but with Him
> Suffer the worst!
> We were taught to loathe traitors."

Nowhere indeed do the great Greek writers give more winning expression to the love of freedom than when they unite it, as they often do, with the tenderness of womanhood or the dignity of old age. Unsurpassed among all heroines of liberty is Antigone, fiery and merciful, defying her city's cruel commands because of her burning love for her dead brother. She flings back contempt in the face of the king who would convict her of lawlessness:

> "It was not God proclaimed those laws to me,
> Nor justice dwelling with the Lords of Death.
> Those light decrees of thine have no such power
> That thou, a man, shouldst override God's laws,
> Unwritten laws, unfailing, not of to-day
> Nor yesterday, but laws that live for ever,
> And no man knoweth when their day appeared."
>
> (Soph: *Antig.*)

It is the same Antigone who utters the divine words that sweep all petty enmity away:

" I'll love with you : I will not hate with you ;
I was not born for that."

With equal greatness of soul Iphigenia, growing up in one terrible hour from a girl into a woman, takes command of her overbearing mother, Clytemnestra the queen, and offers herself at her father's bidding as a free sacrifice for a free people, putting aside with ineffable gentleness the help of the young Achilles, who loves her and would save her at the risk of his own life. She stills the hurrying words of furious alarm and desperate resistance :

" Mother, let me speak !
This anger with my father is in vain,
Vain to use force for what we cannot win.
Thank our brave friend for all his generous zeal
But never let us broil him with the host,—
No gain to us, and ruin for himself.
I have been thinking, mother—hear me now !—
I have chosen death : it is my own free choice.
I have put cowardice away from me.
Honour is mine, now. O mother, say I am right !
Our country, our own Hellas, looks to me :
On me the fleet hangs now, the doom of Troy,
Our women's honour through the years to come.
My death will save them, and my name be blest,
She who saved Hellas ! Life is not so sweet
I should be craven. You who bore your child,
It was for Greece you bore her, not yourself.
Think ! Thousands of our soldiers stand to arms,
They man the waiting ships, they are on fire
To serve their outraged country, die for Greece :
And is my one poor life to hinder all ?
Could we defend that ? Could we call it just ?
And, mother, think ! How could we let our friend
Die for a woman, fighting all his folk ?
A thousand women are not worth one man !
The goddess needs my blood : can I refuse ?
No : take it, conquer Troy !—This shall be
My husband and my children and my fame.
Victory, mother, victory for the Greeks !
Barbarians must never rule this land,
Our own land ! They are slaves, and we are free."
(Eur : *Iph. in Aulis.*)

And beside these women of the poets we may put the man of

actual life :—Socrates speaking in his own defence, not yielding one inch of his dignity and independence, refusing to purchase acquittal by truckling to his judges, "unlike a free-born man," appealing to the example of those Homeric heroes who "cared not for death or danger in comparison with disgrace," and yet with such reverence for his country's laws that he refuses to escape by flight from the execution of the sentence when once it is passed against him. Nothing could be more instinct with sanity, heroism, and tender humour than the passage where Socrates in prison explains to his old friend Crito (who has been urging on his beloved master that the really brave course is to run away) how he cannot leave because he hears the laws of his city calling on him to stay :

"'Listen to us, Socrates, to us who brought you up. Do not set your children or your life or any other thing whatsoever above righteousness, lest when you go to the other world you should have to defend yourself for this before those who govern there. In this life you do not believe that to act thus could be good for you or yours, or righteous or just, and it will not be good when you reach that other land. As it is, if you go, you will go wronged—wronged by men though not by us—but if you went in that disgraceful manner, rendering evil for evil and wrong for wrong, breaking your own pledge and covenant with us, injuring the last beings whom you ought to injure, your own self and your dear ones and your country and us, your country's laws, then we shall bear you anger while you live, and in that other land our brothers, the Laws of Death, will not receive you graciously, for they will know that you went about to destroy us, so far as in you lay. Therefore you must not let Crito overpersuade you against us.' Crito, my dear friend Crito, that, believe me, that is what I think I hear, as the Corybants hear flutes in the air, and the sound of the words rings and echoes in my ears and I can listen to nothing else. Believe me, so far as I see at present, if you speak against them you will speak in vain. Still, if you think you can do any good, say on."

Crito. "No, Socrates, I have nothing I can say."

Soc. "Then let us leave it so, Crito; and let things go as I have said, for that is the way that God has pointed out" (Plat. *Crito.* fin.).

Assuredly the Greeks, and especially the Athenians, envisaged a marvellous union of liberty and law, if too few of them showed the tenacity of Socrates in serving it to the end.

Nor was it for want of keen and incessant discussion on the problems of government and sovereignty that they took the line they did. Plato is among the most searching critics of democracy, and his conclusion in the "Republic" (and perhaps still more in the "Laws") that the supreme authority must be left in the hands of trained thinkers, might have led to a despotism of doctrine as crushing as that of the Inquisition itself. Indeed it is far from impossible that many of the later champions for the supreme ascendancy of the Church were not uninfluenced by Plato. Greek institutions for political liberty are the more impressive when we remember this atmosphere of unlimited discussion in which they were formed.

Most miserably, however, as we saw, the Greeks themselves destroyed by their narrow selfishness what they had designed to create, and moreover, in every city of Greece, however "democratic," the basis was always slave-labour, probably, even at its lowest, in the proportion of three to one. True it is that some Greek thinkers, Plato and Aristotle included, show that their consciences are not quite at ease about slavery, but they made terms with their consciences, for they did not see how to secure, without ample leisure, the cultured life that was to them the crown of life, and yet the manual toil necessary for the means of living left no room for leisure. Such toil, then, must be done by those who were unequal to the demands of culture, and to secure the doing of it compulsion was deemed necessary. The narrow-based city-structure broke down, and with Alexander and his successors we come on the first large empires ruled by Europeans (336 B.C.).

Alexander's first project was to overcome the Persian

Empire—that strange compound of courage and corruption, tenacity and weakness, religion and immorality, that had never been without a certain fascination for the Greeks, from Herodotus to Xenophon, even when they defied it. It did not fail to fascinate Alexander, who seems to have dreamt of uniting Greek and Persian under one autocratic rule. In any case his own amazing career as conqueror, explorer, founder of cities, did open all the gates between Europe and the Near East. And the opening led to large results. The contact between Hellenism and Hebraism, for example, became direct, close, and continuous. Much was achieved in those centuries, lacking though they are in the greatest names, when Alexander's generals and successors were ruling kingdoms throughout Greece, Asia Minor, Palestine, and Egypt, kingdoms that, however despotic at the centre, still tried to foster both local freedom and living culture among their strangely-mingled subjects. Liberty suffered, but there were genuine gains from the attempts at unification.

Above all, the way was prepared for that religion which ever since has called the West to unity, the religion taught by Jesus Christ the Jew.

CHAPTER III

HEBRAISM

BY the days of Alexander the Hebrew tribes—a branch of the Semitic race distinct at least as far back as the second millennium B.C., when they journeyed out of Babylonia into Palestine—had completed a period of growth roughly contemporaneous with the development of Greece from the time of Agamemnon. The mythology they had brought with them from far-off depths, Semitic, Sumerian, primeval, had been refined and deepened by the Prophets and their priestly successors. Like the Greeks, the Hebrew tribes cherished their liberty, fiercely resenting either foreign domination or oppression at home. They had not the Greek genius for constitution-making, but they had, as men of their race have shown on occasion since, the power both for good and for evil of judging (and destroying) the existing order by setting up a higher standard of freedom and equity. Their experiment in kingship was undertaken reluctantly, and on their return from the Exile abandoned without regret. Thoroughly typical instances of their readiness to defy tyranny and officialism are the cases of Nathan, the prophet, crying to David himself, "Thou art the man!" of Amos lashing the rich and the rulers not even as "a prophet or a prophet's son," but as a simple dresser of sycamore trees. Hebrew poetry, like Greek, was nurtured at the breasts of this free spirit, and Hebrew poetry remains as mighty a bequest to modern Europe.

But again, like the Greeks, the Hebrews had been rent asunder by fratricidal conflicts, Israel cursing Judah and

Judah Israel. Like the Greeks, but even more completely than the Greeks, they had fallen a prey in their weakness to foreign conquerors, carried away captive by Assyrians and Babylonians. But, unlike the Greeks, they learnt much from defeat and captivity. The distinguishing mark of these Hebrews was their peculiar religious gift, an apprehension, more intense than can be given in any words but their own, of a Power manifested in Nature and Man, but infinitely beyond both. Man was a worm before Him, and the isles of the sea but as dust in the balance. Any dignity in man lay in his power to obey the commandments of the Lord. This belief put a limit on their speculation, but also it gave them a principle of unity which the Greeks too often lacked. The whole nation could be united by its service to its God.

That service was indeed at the outset very narrowly conceived. The Hebrews recked little of art or science or metaphysics or history. There is the sharpest contrast here to the Greek ideal of the individual's many-sided development culminating in knowledge, friendship, beauty. One might even say that the ancient Hebrew cared little about individual development at all; certainly it was not till a late period that he began to long for individual immortality. The typical prophet, up at least to the time of the Exile (sixth century B.C.), found the significance of life only in walking humbly with his God, and dealing boldly and justly with his fellow-worshippers. His God was at first conceived as concerned exclusively with the righteousness and safety of the nation, and the conception had all the nobility and much of the narrowness of patriotism. But under the stress of suffering and thought it widened out into something far nobler. Especially in the Second Isaiah, writing when at last the Jews were released from Babylon by the Persian Cyrus, do we find developed the thought of the Nation as a Being not merely entrusted with a Law that could give light to the whole world, but as destined through its sufferings to save that world. With a disregard for the ordinary limits of personality often noticeable in Jewish literature, this prophet conceives the Suffering Servant sometimes as the whole

People, sometimes as the Elect among them, the Remnant, sometimes as one individual Person, it may be his own better self or a supreme Man of Sorrows, either past or to come. By his sorrows shall that Servant win rejoicing. " He shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied : by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities."

Inevitably this innocent sufferer, this Holy One of Israel who poured out his soul unto death for the sake of the transgressors, was identified, by all who entered into Isaiah's spirit, with the divine Messiah who was to redeem the world. And this was the easier because the Hebrews were familiar from time immemorial with the idea of a Divine sacrifice, a victim without spot, slain for the sake of the people. Modern research has shown how deep and widespread was this worship of a Dying God, dying to rise again, a God with whom, whether by literally eating his flesh and drinking his blood, or in less material ways, his worshippers could enter into communion, and thus, through him, with one another. The roots of this world-wide sacrament are multifarious, and it varies from the lowest savagery to the most mystical forms of devotion. There are traces of a primitive confusion between the material vehicle and the force embodied in it, as when savages eat the heart of a brave enemy to possess themselves of his valour ; there are signs of the profound impression made on early man by the natural drama of autumn and spring, the corn dying, the seed being buried in the ground, and rising again with fresh life the following year. But the ritual could never have won the hold it did if it had not symbolized much more, first, the unity between all living powers, and then—of still greater importance and more and more prominent as time went on—the truth that the world advances through the suffering of heroic natures and that lesser men and women can " be saved by them and joined with them." The full emergence of this conception into the religious consciousness is one of the gifts that Hebraism, through Christianity, helped to give the Western world, and the clearest signs of it meet us first in Isaiah. This was his contribution,

a memorable one, to the problem of undeserved suffering, a problem pressing heavily on the Jewish thought of the time.

The Jew had always had a keen sense of retributive justice, but in earlier days his concern for the nation had quite overshadowed the individual. But now, after the misery of the Exile, the nation crushed and all but trampled out, the question had to be faced. Jewish answers varied significantly. The long wrestle in Job ends without any clear-cut solution : there is perhaps a hint of immortality, but the real succour comes to Job, as it might have come ages afterwards to Spinoza, simply through his sense of the fathomless majesty in the whole universe. Others, like Job's comforters, fell back, in sheer defiance of fact, on the assertion that the good were always rewarded in this life and the wicked punished. Finally, during the centuries between the Exile and the Birth of Christ, the nation lying under the shadow first of Persia, then of Greece, and lastly of Rome, comfort was looked for in the new hope of immortality, an immortality marked by definite reward and punishment. The nobler among the adherents of this new belief show anticipations, not insignificant, of the Christianity that was to complete their hopes.

Heaven and Hell now first become prominent in Judaism, and with them the belief in a personal Devil for ever opposed to the Lord. The dominance of such ideas in Palestine, aided as they were by echoes from Egypt and by Persia's religion of a cosmic struggle between Ahura Mazda, the lord of light, and Ahriman, the spirit of evil, was the prelude to their overwhelming influence in Europe, where indeed they found congenial soil. For the present they helped to lead a large section of the Jews to an increasing reverence for the Law as a perfect code and an increasing reaction of hardness towards the Gentile, a fanatic disregard for the sweeter counsel symbolized by the story of Ruth, the alien who was true of heart, or Jonah, the prophet who had learnt that the Lord could have compassion even upon Nineveh.

For after the Exile there are two main tendencies to be distinguished in Jewish thought : the one already mentioned, wider and tenderer, of which the Second Isaiah is the type

and which was to flower out later in Christianity; the other, noticeable for example in Ezekiel and Ezra, narrow with a tragic narrowness, concentrating itself in a passion of remorseful resolution on the determination to keep the Law down to its smallest details and thus unite the nation in cleaving to the Lord, pure from idolaters.

The first was incomparably the finer, but it was attended by its own perils. Among its less high-minded supporters there could be a weak submission to foreign rule, a paltering with Greek effeminacy or else a despairing sadness as paralyzing to the full powers of man. The threnody of Ecclesiastes expresses that despair with an imaginative force, a depth and a sympathy that put this little book among the grandest monuments of Pessimism; but it is a grandeur of death. The sadness of many a disillusioned Greek had met with, and intensified, the writer's own. In the eyes of the Preacher there is nothing in life but recurrent cycles of baffled effort and triumphant tyranny. "All the rivers run into the sea, yet the sea is not full; unto the place whence the rivers come, thither they return again" (i. 7). "I returned and considered all the oppressions that are done under the sun, and, behold, the tears of such as were oppressed and they had no comforter" (iv. 1). Revolt is futile. "Curse not the king, no, not in thy thought, and curse not the rich in thy bedchamber, for a bird of the air shall carry the voice, and that which hath wings shall tell the matter" (x. 20).

Yet even Ecclesiastes will not wholly turn aside from effort. He bids men go on toiling and learning, useless as it may seem, "ploughing the sands," casting seed-corn upon the barren waters. Maybe, after all, something will come of it. For wisdom in his eyes still excelleth folly "as far as light excelleth darkness."

CHAPTER IV

THE HELLENISTIC WORLD

IN point of fact the Greek genius for free inquiry, the Greek "love of wisdom," was still of a force to be felt even after Alexander, when, though Greek liberty was dying, it was not yet dead. Especially in science did it make its power known. Hellenistic art and literature, no doubt, should not be despised. The famous "Dying Gaul," one of the most touching figures ever modelled, is a marble copy of a bronze set up in Pergamus by Attalus I after a victory over the Gauls of Galatia. The Hellenists noted and wondered at the iron self-control with which these Northern barbarians could die. They had too little of that in their own composition, but they could still respond to the æsthetic appeal of heroism. The old heroic literature had, indeed, died out. In the old days Æschylus had dealt with nation-wide, world-wide problems: the struggle of Greek against barbarian in "The Persians," the civil strife when brother is slain by brother in "The Seven against Thebes," the revolt of the innovating Liberator against entrenched authority in the "Prometheus," the curse of overweening ambition in the trilogy of "Agamemnon's House," where wrong breeds wrong and revenge revenge until at last Justice takes the place of Vengeance and the pure in heart join with dæmonic Principalities and Powers to establish the ordered life of the City.

Issues as large had been raised by Sophocles and Euripides. The "Antigone" of Sophocles, chosen by Hegel as the very type of tragedy, turns on the clash between the rights of the

individual and the rights of the State. Euripides had burned with the fire of spiritual revolt, flaming out against the cruelties in the mythology of his time, the hypocrisies of war, the injustice to slaves, to women, to defeated enemies. Within a generation after the death of Alexander (323 B.C.), how the range of poetry has dwindled! Whether in Greece herself—and in the Peloponnese there were recurrent struggles for full freedom—or in Asia Minor, or at Syracuse under an independent tyrant, or at the brilliant Alexandrian court founded by the Macedonian Ptolemy, what poets there are never touch on politics except as courtiers. Sparkle they have and charm, even freshness, as in the delicious pastorals of Theocritus, but the abounding strength has gone which could encounter all the facts of life. The strength which still remained worked in the safer realm of pure science, or quietly in history, or aloof on the grave heights of philosophy. The Greek Euclid (fl. 300 B.C.) consolidates or extends the earlier work in geometry. The Greek Archimedes, half a century later, links mathematics and physics, stating, for example, the principle of the lever, learning how to determine the specific gravity of a material by comparing its weight in water and in air. The Greek Hipparchus (fl. 150 B.C.), studying the heavenly bodies, prepares the way for Ptolemy's theory of their motions elaborated in the second century of our era, a theory coherent enough to satisfy men until the day of Copernicus. The Greek Polybius (fl. 127 B.C.), like the Greek Plutarch two centuries later, writing of liberty as of a vanished dream, bows before the new order introduced by Rome.

Stoicism meanwhile built, century by century, its castle of refuge for all those who, in the saddening world, despaired of altering the face of things, saw no chance for the individual's development in human joy, and yet longed to be at peace with the universe. The intellectual roots of Stoicism are Greek, but growing up as it did in Asia Minor from the day of Alexander onwards, it owed much to the devout spirit of the Jews,—(there is indeed some reason for thinking that the founders, Zeno and Cleanthes, may have had Hebraic blood),—and as the years went on it owed much also to the discipline

of Rome, who emerges, a century after Alexander, from her mastery of the Western Mediterranean to dominate Macedonia and the Near East and so to challenge the leadership of the known civilized world. The finest prose of Stoicism, indeed, was written under the Roman Empire itself. Drawn from, and appealing to the three great cultures of the Ancient World—Greek, Hebrew, Roman—Stoicism appeals in every age to the disappointed and heroic heart. The individual must find his peace in possessing his own soul, unshaken in will, unshattered by personal or public catastrophe, satisfied that in living the life of self-control he is at one with those divine forces of Reason which build up the connected harmony of the universe. Thus even under the shadow of oppression he may find freedom for his own soul. But the Stoic freedom was gained through mutilating man's desire. To be at one with the universe a man must recognize that he was only a part—and a transitory, subordinate part—of the vast Nature, God, Reason, Destiny, that embraced him ; he must submit himself to the Whole and not expect the Whole to concern itself for him. He could touch the Divine life for a moment, then he passed, and his place knew him no more. The answer chimed with the austerer notes in men's thought, whether from Greek philosophy, assuming a Perfection in which man had no abiding share, or from Hebrew religion, worshipping a God before whom the generations vanished as a watch in the night, or Roman morality, demanding the complete sacrifice of the citizen to the Commonwealth. But it resembled Hebrew and Roman rather than Greek in its contempt for all human excellence other than moral strength. It is significant that even the Greek Epictetus praises the Cynic ascetics as the chosen " athletes of God." But narrower though it was here, it was wider than the classic Greek in its growing insistence on the solidarity of all men ; little in themselves, they were all alike part of the All, and in this consciousness the Stoic attained his greatest triumph. The classic poet had cried to Athens, " Dear city of Cecrops," the Stoic emperor will cry to the universe, " Dear city of God."[1]

[1] Marcus Aurelius, " Meditations," Bk. 4.

Epictetus the slave, old, crippled, and despised, will count himself a glad father to all men, singing hymns of joy all day long.

But the triumphant note of Epictetus is comparatively rare; broadly speaking, the Stoics show that they lived by a religion without hope. Those who wanted more turned to the Mysteries, Greek, Egyptian, or Persian, that promised redemption through sacramental ritual. Less ardent natures contented themselves with a "philosophy" of personal pleasure, refined or gross according as temperament interpreted the ideal of harmony in this life set up by the Greek Epicurus (d. 270 B.C.). The Platonic hope of a free development up to full satisfaction in the boundless sea of beauty and the clear vision of absolute truth was fading from men's minds. Even when revived later in the Neo-Platonism of Plotinus (d. A.D. 270), it appeared rather as a way of escape from the concrete world, than as a fulfilment of what was best in it. Nor was there as yet any general hold on the idea of world-progress as something to live for over and above the happiness of men alive, although we find occasional foreshadowings of this hope, as in the Lucretian outline of historical evolution or in the Hebrew prophecies of Israel's destiny.

CHAPTER V

THE COMING OF CHRISTIANITY

INTO such a world came Christianity. Round the figure of Christ have gathered centuries of love and hatred, worship and bitter controversy, the bitterer perhaps because of all we cannot know and would give so much to know. But out of the confusion and obscurity some things emerge plainly enough. Jesus of Nazareth lived in the faith that "the Maker and Father of the universe" was not, as Plato had said, "hard to find and impossible to declare to all men," but a Spirit who could be found when sought by children and the simple-hearted. He himself, so He believed, was one with that Spirit, and all men and women, if they chose to give up their selfish selves, could be united with Him and His Father, and enter the Kingdom of Heaven, in this world and in the world to come. He died for that faith, and, as He foretold, it has been a light for myriads since His death. But the interpretations of His teaching, both for conduct and theory, have been myriad also. Some consequences, no doubt, are clear: an altogether new sense of freedom and unity; the Spirit of God gave man a courage and certainty beyond his own and filled him with unbounded compassion for all other men as sons of the one Father: privilege and pride and lust were swept away, and suffering could be not only endured but accepted with joy as somehow working in the end for the sufferer's good. But what shall be said of other matters? Did Christ preach practical communism? Franciscan poverty? Asceticism in any sense? Non-resistance in the full sense? Did He believe in everlasting

hell ? Did He demand faith in Himself as one in whom dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead ? Did He look for an immediate and catastrophic " End of the World " ?

Passages equally authentic, so far as we can gather, can be quoted in either sense, and devoted Christians have given diametrically opposite answers, even if we grant that, to every one of these questions, the typical answer has been Yes. Christ, like Socrates, left nothing written, and His words, vivifying, unforgettable, were never systematic. Dispute was inevitable : even in the earliest days disputes between the Jewish Christians and the Hellenizing Christians almost tore the Church in two. It was just here that St. Paul, however we may criticize him, did inestimable service by concentrating on the common elements in the new religion, the new confidence, sympathy, and joy, widening, so far as he could, the bounds of dogma, dogmatist though he was himself, and organizing for the central rite of the infant Church that ritual of the sacrificial, sacramental bread and wine which linked a thousand memories of the race with the hope of a new power, flowing from a Man who had died for men, and making all things new in one wide fellowship.

Along with this, we must confess, Paul is responsible for legalistic theories about the Fall and the Atonement that fettered the freer spirit of Christ. None the less he insisted that the love he put at the head of the Christian virtues included faith and hope for all men. And the inclusion is fully endorsed by the comparisons of history. Buddhism had preached as much tenderness, Stoicism as much endurance. But the failing heart of the ancient world clutched at the Christian hope that man was not left alone and desolate, a miserable copy of a Perfection he could never reach, a feeble flame beating helplessly against a closed ring of irrational matter.

In Paul's own epistles we can see how this new hope could give new life to the old shining dreams of Platonism, and new width also, for while Plato hesitated to include more than a chosen few, Paul dreamed of a goal where all men should have the liberty of the children of God and be as stars differing only

in glory from one another. The intellectual sympathy, however, that can be discovered between Platonism and Paulinism did not permeate the early Church. It was not till the rebirth of thought centuries later in Italy that the possibilities of the union were realized. Indeed, it is important to emphasize at the outset that early Christianity did lower, and most gravely, the respect for intellect and science, exulting that what had been hidden from the wise and prudent was now revealed to babes. In this, no doubt, it did not fully understand its own central idea that the highest thing in the universe may be incarnate in the highest powers of man. Its reverence for brotherly love and sincerity of faith hid from it too readily the value of other greatnesses.

Meanwhile the general import of the Christian hope goes far to explain the passion in the controversies over the question whether Christ was the *same* as the Father or only *like* the Father. To say He was only *like* was, so felt the Hellenist Athanasius, to give up "our all." Doubtless these embittered polemics bid fair to destroy the childlike love and trust that was supposed to signalize the Christian. When we read how the leaders of the Church met in those Councils where the Spirit of God was believed by the devout to guide His servants into all truth, too often it is the spirit of faction that strikes upon us most, though real great issues for religious thought were actually at stake as well. Indeed, what we have chiefly to note in these first centuries is a perceptible hardening among the Christians, not unlike the old hardening of the Pharisees, their former kindred and enemies, round the sacrosanct Law. There were many reasons for this. Christianity had first to struggle for its life against ruthless persecution from the Roman Emperors (Marcus Aurelius, the Stoic saint, included). The autocratic Empire could not tolerate defiance by irresponsible individuals, still less from a strong organization that stood outside its own hierarchy. Overt defiance might be limited to few cases, but the Roman rulers were accomplished enough to discern how obstinate a foe they had in the conscientious refusal to recognize the State's right to override all private scruples. It was

the problem of Sophocles' " Antigone " once again, and on a larger scale : an intelligent despotism had to solve it either by crushing the conscience of the Church or allying itself with her. The attempt to crush was made first, and the natural result was embitterment. Before the persecution of Nero, the first in the sinister list, St. Paul had boldly appealed to the very Cæsar under whom, four years later, he was to suffer martyrdom. To the writer of the Apocalypse, immediately afterwards, Rome has become a harlot drunk with the blood of the saints, and indeed Nero, a Beast not only in the imagination of St. John, had drunk enough and to spare of blood.[1] The Romans, it may be noted, felt this themselves. A revolt compelled Nero to suicide, and the conscience of the people justified the compulsion.

Paul had looked to Rome as the crowning-place of his mission, and his work there, fertilized, according to tradition, by his martyrdom, together with that of his colleague and rival, St. Peter, was in fact to bear rich fruit later. But inevitably for the time there was a reaction. Inevitably the young community tightened its lines. And when, after three centuries, Rome with her genius for acknowledging, just in time, the forces that move men, came forward under Constantine to make Christianity the established religion of her own vast empire, from the bounds of Persia on the East to Britain on the West, then the temptation to rigidity assailed the Church in an even more insidious form. She had become the ally of a world-wide despotism. This is curiously reflected in the history of doctrine, defined alternately by the Councils of the Church and by the Emperors.

Incidentally the alliance nipped whatever seeds of socialism, as we should call it now, had been cherished by the first generation of disciples. There is no further dream of reconstructing the fabric of society on earth after the pattern of the Heavenly Kingdom. Paul had been right in divining that the Church must somehow come to terms with secular

[1] I follow Renan in taking A.D. 60 as the year of Paul's departure for Rome and 68 or 69 as the date of the Apocalypse, the Neronian persecution, during which Paul was martyred, bursting out in 64.

and pagan life, but the price she paid for this was perhaps higher than he knew. The early enthusiastic faith, ready for experiment, confident of persuading men to be Christian, rapidly stiffened into impenetrable orthodoxy, all the more rapidly because of the Jewish tradition on the one hand pointing to a divinely-revealed Rule, and the Greek tradition, going back to Plato, on the other, convinced that the truth, once discovered by the cultured intellect, could and should be imposed on the incapable vulgar. The dogmas of ecclesiastical infallibility and of Hell for the heretic took firm hold, in spite of men like Origen, on the Fathers of the Church. More especially when the sterner Latin Fathers replaced the influence of the subtler and more sympathetic Greek.

The setback to free inquiry was all the greater because of the neglect into which Science now fell under Roman rule, a neglect again increased by the ascetic contempt of " matter " prevalent in all schools of religious thought. Orthodox Christianity did indeed struggle, in the name of the Incarnation, against its extremer forms, but on the whole the Church was at least as saturated with it as the average Stoic or Neo-Platonist. The whole spirit of the time, so far as it was definitely religious, taught men to look on this world as a snare to escape from, or at best as a training-ground for character, never as something of absorbing interest and value in itself, more than worthy of a man's whole study and devotion. And the Christian distrust of the intellect could not but increase the harm. It is also, we may note, in these early years of Christianity that hermits and monks first make their appearance in the life of the Western world. St. Anthony, the recluse of Egypt, stands as the first founder of Christian monasticism.

CHAPTER VI

ROME, REPUBLICAN, IMPERIAL, DECADENT

ROME, with all her power, was little likely to rescue science. No Roman, even of the classic prime, except Lucretius, shows real enthusiasm for scientific knowledge, and it is not without some reason that the careless slaughter of Archimedes by a Roman soldier at the sack of Syracuse has been taken as symbolic of Rome's whole attitude.[1] Vaguely she respected knowledge and art, but first and foremost she was absorbed in Government, and her astonishing success in this, all deductions made, might seem to justify her.

> "Let others learn the courses of the stars,
> Map out the sky, or plead with subtle skill,
> Or mould us living faces from the marble:
> Thou, Roman, shalt remember how to rule,
> Lay down the laws of Peace, and teach her ways,
> Pardon the fallen, overthrow the proud."

Virgil's well-known lines mark the scope of the Roman Imperialism at its best, but with the scope the limitations are unconsciously revealed.

At the time when Virgil wrote and Christ was born Rome had dominated the Italian Peninsula, destroyed her Semitic rival Carthage, subdued Celtic Gaul and Celtiberian Spain, and, piece by piece, absorbed the divided dominions of Alexander, partly because of their internecine struggles, as in

[1] In fairness we should add that Cicero, certainly a typical Roman, cleared with his own hands the tomb of Archimedes from its overgrowth. (See "The Living Past," p. 144.)

Greece and Palestine, partly because of her own huge strength, but also because, once she had conquered a country, she did maintain, on the whole, better than her rivals the standards of law and justice. Complete independence of herself she would never allow, but there was something in the claim of the consul Flaminius [1] that "it was not the Roman way to destroy those who had been their enemies." On the contrary, Rome was always eager to incorporate in her own system any efficient elements in a former administration, so that in the Near East she became not so much the successor as the new and energetic partner in the Hellenistic enterprise. But she had done nothing really to solve the problem of rich and poor, slave and free; she had scarcely dreamt of a solution. And she had lost her republican freedom: her citizens had no longer the right, simply as citizens, even if they held no office, to a direct voice in public affairs. In a sense she had been nurtured in that freedom, for her history begins with the expulsion of kings, and republican rights (though only after a long struggle) had been extended from patrician nobles to all the freemen in the city. But the Roman plebeians, once fully enfranchised, showed themselves every whit as narrow to outsiders as ever their patrician opponents had been to them, and Roman victories went far to breed in the whole city the vices of an oppressive, ambitious, and quarrelsome oligarchy. The Republic fell, largely because the Empire offered a truce to factious intrigue, a better chance to the Provinces saved from the greedy officials who courted the favour of a corrupt electorate, and a chance at least as good to the poor and the enslaved.

Roman law, and law was one of Rome's real glories, was built up mainly in Imperial times, and with the help of those Greeks and Syrians that the Empire accepted as Roman citizens. None the less the loss of liberty meant a loss of creative powers, and the sternness of Tacitus shows how keenly the acuter minds could feel that loss. Nor is Tacitus Rome's only witness to the value of freedom. It is important to remember that, except for Virgil and Horace under Augus-

[1] Polyb. Bk. 18, § 37.

tus, captivated by the fair hope of peace and union after bloody civil war, all her most remarkable writers were bred up in liberty and bear the marks of it, Lucretius, Catullus, Livy, Cicero. And thus their writings have lived on side by side with the Greek as an influence for freedom down the ages. Hobbes in England, fleeing for refuge to absolutism, felt good reason to fear it: "By reading of these Greek and Latin authors men from their childhood have gotten a habit, under a false show of liberty, of favouring tumults and of licentious controlling the actions of their sovereigns and again of controlling those controllers." France, however absolutist her own government, never forgot the classical heroes and martyrs of freedom. Even under Louis XIV Corneille thrills to their memory, and every reader knows the part it played, when fully aroused in the French Revolution.

On the other hand Imperial Rome has cast a spell as potent and as far-reaching by her work in welding the nations of Europe together, teaching order to the barbarians, enlisting the intellect of Greece so that the Empire became almost as much Hellenistic as Roman, accepting religion from the Jews, building up a fabric that, however rigid, endured for centuries because it recognized so much of human solidarity. She stands for unity as the Republicans stood for liberty. And the potency of her spell has been both for good and evil. Charlemagne, Barbarossa, Innocent III, Louis XIV, Napoleon, Hohenzollerns, Tsars, British Imperialists, all, in varying ways, have remembered Rome and her Empire of the World. And there have been idealists like Mazzini, apostle of the most generous political gospel ever preached, who have dreamed of uniting what was best in both classic traditions, the Republican and the Imperial. Rome, Mazzini said, had twice given the word to Europe, once as Rome of the Ancient Empire, once as Rome of the Mediæval Church; he called on her to give it a third time as the herald of Modern Europe united in a Federation of free and equal States.

At its best the Roman Empire, succeeded by its spiritual

heir, the Roman Church, cherished the hope of universal peace based on universal law. He must be blind indeed who would deny greatness to it, this hope, to quote Seeley, "of the whole race passing out of its state of clannish division, as the children of Israel themselves had done in the time of Moses, and becoming fit to receive a universal constitution."

But this noble dream from the day of its birth till now has been obscured and defaced by the petty ambition and greed of man. It has an immortal destiny, but it was conceived in iniquity. From the first the Roman Empire sinned against freedom. The opponents of Cæsar, even his murderers, had a tragic sense of the truth; tragic, we say, because they themselves were caught in a conflict, to them insoluble, between two spiritual forces, both, as Tacitus recognized, needed for the world, government and liberty. Such a conflict, as Hegel knew and Shakespeare felt, has in it the very essence of tragedy. "Nihil contra Deum, nisi Deus ipse": "Only God can hamper God." If Julius himself, one of the greatest architects of order who ever lived, was part of the divine, so also were those who clung to the shadow of Republican liberty, and approved the cause that the gods of this world had disapproved. The German Mommsen, panegyrist of Julius, has seen this plainly. And that in consequence the empire Julius founded was not, and could not be, anything but the least bad of the courses then open to statesmen. Cæsarism made in the end not for life but for death.

The long sequel of the Roman Empire, its slow "Decline and Fall," in spite of the ability of its autocrats, abundantly illustrates this. Gradually even local liberty was stifled and with it imaginative genius. The later Roman Empire is marked by an ominous dearth of science everywhere, a prevailing deadness in literature—St. Augustine's is the only vivid name—and in Europe by a complete absence of vital art, except for what radiated from the focus of Constantinople. There the old root of Greek imagination, still sensitive to any magnificent appeal, put forth the last of its great blossoms, the austere and grandiose flower of Byzantine Art, an art

rigid and hieratic enough, but able to body forth with a unique dignity the stupendous visions of the Christian Church, the majestic ideals of the Empire, the mysterious broodings of the East, and by so doing to keep alive a tradition of splendour in Art that was to guide the Italian painters when, ages afterwards, they rose in the light of the Rebirth. But with this one exception a paralysis seems to fall on the imagination of Europe. And the knowledge of this one fact should be enough to make a nation feel alarm as well as pride if she finds herself compared to Imperial Rome.

But Mommsen is equally right in emphasizing the truth that Republican Rome herself had, in earlier days, by her selfishness and corruption, barred her own way to better things. Had the early Republicans, we may ask ourselves, instead of scouting the offer of the hardy Italian tribes whom they fought so fiercely and so long, accepted the proposal that one consul at least should always be a Samnite, had they even co-operated with Carthage instead of destroying her, how different, and how far happier, might the tradition of Europe have been !

The Roman Empire, we might say with Dante and Augustine, was indeed given by God, but given, we should add, because of the hardness of men's hearts. Julius and Augustus saved all that could then be saved, but it was far from all that man desired. And here we come to the centre of the difficulty. Man at his best desires two things, never wholly to be reconciled on this planet : perfect freedom of individual judgment, and complete harmony with other men both in thought and in action. Obviously, so long as men hold contradictory views, this double goal can never be reached. But, equally truly if less obviously, the best in man cannot be at peace unless he can count himself as advancing towards it. For at bottom he believes that his own personality depends on all other persons, and his own opinion needs all other opinions before it can reach truth. In short, he believes he was made for life in common, as Aristotle said, and can only grow to his full stature in a society. Perhaps he can never reach this goal, but he can never cease to struggle for it. This way and that he tries, and hence the age-long conflict

between the two principles on which all communities hang, between order and freedom, public authority and private judgment, law and conscience, government and individual enterprise, the man and the state, a nation and its rivals.

The common consent of Europe has recognized, ever since the revival of learning, the service rendered by Roman Law to one at least of these two basic principles. And at the close of the Middle Ages, to men bewildered and wearied by the divided loyalties of feudalism, the extravagant claims of the Church, the senseless practices of ordeal and wager by battle, Roman law, as they struggled to evolve order out of chaos, could bring inestimable help. Help, but, as we shall see, danger also.

On the good side, even a cursory glance at the Codex (completed under Justinian *circa* A.D. 550) can make us understand how Roman Law evoked the enthusiasm of men so wide apart as Dante and Rabelais. For that Law, whatever its defects, did aim at thorough-going justice, did try to build up a complete system of order, where men and women could be dealt with directly, their special duties and rights recognized as before an omnipresent and consistent Judge. The Codex had some reason for its high claim to be "a Temple of Justice," even if after all the justice was but "Roman" (i. 17).

There is a greatness about it, a comprehensive sweep of design which it does not seem fanciful to compare with the grand structure of Santa Sophia, the Church of the Holy Wisdom, built by a Greek architect under Justinian himself, the boast of Constantinople to this day. And if the code is harsh, notably in the sanction of torture to procure evidence, and in the treatment of slaves and heretics, still it was less harsh than many in mediæval days. Less harsh too in its treatment of slaves than the Roman Republic had ever been. The softening is notable, and to be ascribed in the first instance to Stoicism with its stress on the solidarity of mankind. In the long development from Hadrian early in the second century A.D., directing skilled jurists to consolidate the "judge-made" law of the prætors—itself an inheritance

INTERIOR OF SANTA SOPHIA
(Constantinople)

from Republican times—a high place is held by the labours of the Antonine emperors, genuinely anxious to bring the laws of Rome nearer to the law of Nature. None the less, and here lay a deep defect, Roman law never repudiated slavery, and the rift runs right through its magnificent scheme. Ulpian may write in its pages: "By the law of Nature men are born free and equal" (Digest i. 4; lxvii. 32). But the pages go on to enumerate the disabilities of the slave.

In spite of this, the code through its insight into the true nature of law did lay corner-stones for the building of an ordered and free society. It countenanced no such absurdities as trial by ordeal. Its maxims have become household words among us all: "No man shall be a judge in his own case" (Codex iii. 6). "No appeal for mercy shall be made while a case is being tried" (Codex i. 21).

This reverence for law extends into the political sphere, and the Autocrat himself acknowledges its superiority: "It befits the majesty of the Monarch to declare that he himself is bound by the laws. So true is it that our authority rests on the authority of justice, and for the Imperial Power to submit to law is greater than Empire itself" (Codex i. 14).

Nor was that superiority acknowledged only in words. Theodosius the Great submitted in act when he did penance before St. Ambrose at Milan to expiate a deed of lawless cruelty committed in the haste of his anger. That penance is the more noteworthy, because the massacre at Thessalonica, savage and lawless as it was, had been provoked by a monstrous outbreak of unruly Greek citizens against loyal Gothic soldiers, soldiers whom Theodosius with a statesman's insight was trying to win for the Empire.

But, and here we come on the second grave defect, in the last resort, under the Roman Empire the law was made—not by the people, but by the Emperor. "All the rights and all the powers of the Roman people have been transferred to the Emperor." "To him alone is it granted to make the laws and to interpret them" (i. 17).

The ominous doctrine is set out by Justinian himself and follows immediately on the proud humility of the Theodosian

saying.[1] The two together foreshadow many a later quarrel between constitutional monarchy and despotism. Both were in fact constantly quoted, e.g. the Theodosian by Milton, and, before Milton, as the legend of the French Huguenot treatise *Vindiciæ contra tyrannos.*

[1] The saying stands in the name of the younger Theodosius. But the utterance seems too remarkable to be his own. One speculates as to its history. Is it due ultimately to the influence of his grandfather, the great Theodosius himself?

PART II.—MEDIÆVAL

CHAPTER VII

EUROPE AND THE BARBARIANS: THE DARK AGES AND MONASTICISM

WHILE the Græco-Roman Empire lasted, there was little quarrel from within. The forces of its despotism were so strong and its structure so firmly knit that the Empire might have endured indefinitely—as it was it survived with the Greeks in Constantinople for more than a thousand years—had it not been for the persistent pressure of the barbarians from North and East, a pressure that has left ineffaceable marks on almost every country in Europe. In the Republican days Rome had been menaced from the West by Celts of Gaul and Celtiberians of Spain, but the conquests of Cæsar and Pompey removed that danger for ever. The men Rome dreaded later were chiefly of Germanic stock, travelling West and South, and it was largely to guard against them that Constantine (*circa* A.D. 300) shifted the main seat of government from Rome to Byzantium, thenceforward Constantinople in his honour, a step that led to the division of the Empire into East and West.

We call these wandering tribes barbarian, and so they were, but many of them, fathers of modern Europe—Franci, for example, Alemanni, Saxones, Gothi, Vandali—were not only vigorous and able, they were also keenly sensitive to civilization. Often they entered the service of the Empire peacefully, as soldiers or administrators, and served it well. The Goths, in particular, attract us both by their ability and their

chivalry. In the century of Constantine they were Christianized, peacefully and within their own borders, by Ulfilas, a countryman, "or at least," as Gibbon writes,[1] "a subject of their own." And the statesmen on either side, Roman or Teuton, dreamed again and again of uniting the Gothic strength with the Roman reverence for law. But the turbulence of the one race and the prejudice of the other prevented it. It is significant that no "barbarian," however loyal or capable, was ever allowed to become Emperor. That aspiration was accounted treasonable; and when, in 410, Alaric the Visigoth, the king of the West Goths, defied the weak Honorius in the West and captured the city that had been inviolate for eight centuries—nearly as long as from now to the Norman Conquest—it seemed to many that the foundations of the world were shaken.

Then it was that St. Augustine wrote his "City of God," a book that must have done much to strengthen the Bishopric of Rome—already showing signs of its commanding position later—for its pages were expressly written, as Augustine tells us himself, both to defend Christianity against the charge of having caused the ruin and to comfort the faithful with the assurance that, though her secular Empire might be taken from Rome, as it had been given to her, by the decree of the One True God, yet there remained a greater and more abiding City than the Rome of this world, to wit, a heavenly. A new unity, the unity of the Church and her discipline, was growing up for the West, when the old unity of the Empire was breaking down.

Rome was naturally the centre of the new system both because of her political prestige in the past and the sacred traditions of St. Peter and St. Paul. But the dreaded barbarians, though Augustine was blind to it, were in the end to bring a new element of freedom and vigour into Europe. The Goths, though Christian, were Arians, and the orthodox Augustine never thinks of heretics as fellow-citizens in the Heavenly City. Even when Galla Placidia, daughter of

[1] "Decline and Fall," xxxvii. The ultimate nationality of Ulfilas is doubtful.

Theodosius himself, married Alaric's successor, the chivalrous Ataulf, the best she could do was to persuade her husband to take his Visigoths to Spain (her father's early home), and rule it as a loyal province of the Empire. The same opposition between Arian and Athanasian helped to destroy the second attempt at a Romano-Gothic kingdom made a century later, when the Roman Empire was tottering in the West, under Theodoric the Ostrogoth, a man praised expressly by Procopius, the acute and impartial Greek, as " no tyrant, but a true king, loved beyond measure by Goths and Italians alike." The testimony of Procopius is the more remarkable seeing that he was the secretary of Belisarius, the renowned Byzantine general, who did so much to break the Goths and drive them out of Italy. And it is confirmed by all we know of Theodoric's career, admirable except for the slaughter of his barbarian rival Odoacer at the beginning of his reign, and his persecution of the Romans whom he believed to be conspiring against him at the close, among whom should be mentioned Boethius, the " last learned man " of the dying classic world.

Between the two Gothic waves there swept across Europe from East to West invaders of a widely different type, Attila and his Huns—the first vanguard of the warlike stock, nursed on the tablelands between China, India, and Russia, that has sent swarm after swarm to disturb the West, Huns, Bulgars, Avars, Magyars (Hungarians), Turks, and Tartars. Pressing on again and again, sometimes by devious routes, the various swarms have been further modified both by the blood and the culture of the nations with whom they mingled, and yet we seem able to discern features common to them all. Brave, proud, tenacious, often chivalrous, they are also prone, even more than Westerners, to tyranny and cruelty, and far less easily civilized. They have done little for culture and much for war. None the less their daring and simplicity has never been without its charm, and even in Attila's day there were men and women here and there fascinated by the wild freedom of their life and its contrast to the Imperial rigidity. But thousands more were only terrified by the Scourge of God and his savage horsemen ; and the common terror united

barbarians and Imperials in a common resistance. Roman, Celt, and Teuton met the torrent of invaders on the eastern plains of France (A.D. 451) and hurled them back, to be swallowed up in the deserts from which they came.

As Attila retreated, he struck again at civilization, plunging into Italy. It is said that he was turned back from Rome by the pleading of Pope Leo I, and there can be little doubt that the story at least marks a stage in the growing power of the Roman Bishopric.

Attila's last assault, if abortive, was dreadful, and a group of Northern Italians, with desperate courage, fled to the lagoons at the head of the Adriatic and there, unmolested by the barbarians (who never had ships), untroubled by their merely nominal allegiance to Constantinople, and guided by the old freer traditions of Roman civic life, Venice arose, built up from the sea. And Venice, as Machiavelli pointed out long afterwards, grew great because she had " her beginnings in freedom." (" Discourses on Livy.")

The Northern invasions did not cease when the Goths were driven beyond the Alps. At the end of the sixth century, after nearly two hundred years of barbarian flood and ebb, the greater part of Italy, though neither Venice nor Rome, fell under the Teuton Lombards (Langobardi, Longbeards), a virile and gifted race, if less remarkable than the Gothic. And, though the influence of race has often been over-estimated, it seems paradoxical to deny that the prolonged infusion of Northern blood played an important part in the change from Italy of the Empire to Italy of the Middle Ages.

And now the chaos deepens in the history of the West. Until the time of Charlemagne, two centuries later, there is no organization strong enough even to compare with the broken Empire. Independently and confusedly the shifting tribes are gradually settling down into positions more or less characteristic of modern Europe, invaders fusing, more or less completely, with invaded. In England, for example, the Celtic Britons, long since separated from the Rome that had ruled them and Christianized them, are forced under Teuton pagans—Angles, Saxons and Jutes from the shores

of the Baltic and the Northern Sea. In France, Celtic and Romanized Gauls submit to Teutonic Franks from the Rhine—a pure German stock—and mingle with Teutonic Burgundians on the Rhone.

Meanwhile in the bankruptcy of civil government the Christian Church stands out prominently, especially in Italy, where the Popes champion their countrymen against the Lombard invaders on the one hand and the caprice of Constantinople on the other.

Gregory the First and the Great (590–610) is a fine type of his order, with many of its virtues and not without its limitations. A strong and wise administrator—and St. Peter's patrimony was already large—he was unremitting in relieving the temporal necessities of his poor, while his supreme interest lay in serving the spiritual life as he conceived it by the spread of the true faith. The Lombards he usually referred to as "unspeakable," yet he saved Rome from their hands by timely concessions and wise pleading, and he won a profound influence over their Queen Theodolinda, hoping, through her, to win them for orthodoxy, and possibly recognizing that they were too strong ever to be driven out of the country though never strong enough to unify it.

Gregory's most attractive side, as well as his most characteristic, is, indeed, shown by his missionary zeal. Historians have loved to tell how he had pity, as a young man, on the angel-faced English children sold as slaves in the Roman market, and how later on he sent Augustine, the Benedictine monk, to reclaim the island that had lapsed, after the Saxon invasion, into heathen barbarism, and how Augustine and his fellows brought back the Faith to the South, rivalled in the North by St. Columba from the still faithful Celtic Ireland. In acts like this Gregory must be recognized as a true seeker for unity and truth. Yet we cannot help also suspecting in him, as Milman suggests, something of the wily Italian ecclesiastic when we read the different letters he wrote in the same month to Ethelbert the Saxon King, and to a colleague of Augustine's. (Bede, "Eccl. Hist.," chap. 30, 32.) The priest is told to lead the idolaters gently, transforming the

heathen temples, not destroying them. Ethelbert the king, on the other hand, is urged by the shining example of Constantine the Great and warned by the approaching terrors of the Day of Judgment to " overthrow " the sinful structures and " terrify " as well as soothe. The odious part, as so often afterwards, was left to the secular arm.

Again, Gregory reflects the prevailing temper of the Church in his monkish cast of mind. The highest reaches of the spiritual life are, for him, divorced both from the daily sanctities of common humanity and from the intellectual search for knowledge. He puts celibacy far above marriage, and, himself ignorant of Greek, speaks with pain and astonishment of clergy so far forgetting themselves as to teach grammar, " when even a layman, if really religious, would avoid such matters." (Letters, ix. 48.)

His chosen emissary was, as he himself had been, a Benedictine monk, and the name of the Italian St. Benedict, half a century before (*circa* 540), stands as the great reorganizer of Western monasticism. Ever since the early days of Christianity there had been hermits and recluses, but Benedict's achievement lay in the establishment of brotherhoods vowed not only to abstinence but to an arduous life in common. With him revive the old ideals of religious communism, the active sense of the glory in bearing hardness and sacrificing private gain for the sake of the brethren.

There is a greatness in this resolute self-denial carried through in a world scrambling after booty and power. The value of that example must always be set against the monstrous elements in the monastic rule, the inhuman tyranny, the deadening vacancy, the later corruption. Moreover Benedict by insisting on manual labour challenged directly the old narrowness of the classic ideal that had ruled out from the highest life all men engaged in such toil as unfitted for culture. Here the classic order of merit is absolutely reversed by Benedict : the labour that for them fettered the spirit for him sets it free. And if his own conception was narrow it here corrected a narrowness that could be as inhuman as anything monkish. The cold contempt for a man who works with his

hands was changed by a true follower of Benedict into reverence. It is impossible to say how much our modern belief in the dignity of labour may not owe to the steady example of a rule of life so remote from modern belief on the whole.

Nor was the effect of monasticism on culture merely negative. Most monks, like the clergy in general, were expected at least to read and write and know enough Latin for the Mass, and thus, in spite of Gregory's warning, there were monasteries such as Monte Cassino in Italy (Benedict's own foundation and famous up to our own days), Jarrow in England, the home of Bede, and the Irish schooling-grounds of Johannes Erigena (John the Scot), where scholarship could find a nursing-place. Nor was it scholarship only that the cloister protected. The lovely illumination in many a manuscript proves the shelter monasticism could give to at least the minor forms of art.

None the less the spirit dominant among the devout of these centuries was simply obscurantist. The trend was still increasingly away from the toil of thought and observation or the sustained effort of the higher arts to the routine duties of simple piety and manual labour, or to the ecstasies of rapt devotion. It is easy to persuade men to remain ignorant, and it was long before the fetters thus imposed were shaken from the human spirit. Reason rusted with neglect, and when men argued at all utterly childish arguments entangled their genuine thought. The unsound traditions lingered long, so long that even as late as the fourteenth century a mind vigorous and proud as Dante's must be concerned to rebut such reasoning as that because Levi was older than Judah the Church must be given more power than the State. ("De Monarchia," Bk. iii. chap. v.)

CHAPTER VIII

MOHAMMEDANISM

MEANWHILE, just when the learning of the West seemed to have sunk to the lowest level, when European thought was slumbering in chains and European government was all but choked in anarchy, far away, in the arid land of Arabia, the Semite Mohammed was building up a religion which was to vivify and unify the Near East and make a bid to capture Europe itself.

Like most prophets, Mohammed was at first scorned by his own people, but, unlike many, he won them before his death (632). And the date of his flight to Mecca only ten years earlier (622), the Hĕgĭra, marks for Mohammedans the beginning of their era.

At once, almost, after his death the new religion spread widely, and far more rapidly than Christianity had ever done, sweeping with whirlwind speed over Syria, Palestine, Persia, Egypt—Egypt dominated ever since, till our own time, by Mohammedan Arabs or Mohammedan Turks—forcing itself to the very gates of Constantinople, driving along the northern coast of Africa, firing the Moors and Berbers, crossing into Spain, overthrowing the Christian Visigoths and thrusting the Christian remnant back on to the Pyrenees, penetrating finally into France, there, however, to be met and defeated by Charles Martel the Frank, grandfather of Charlemagne, the "Hammer of the Moors" (Battle of Tours, 732).

Later, Mohammedanism was to be welcomed by the Turks (on their way through Persia), and penetrate to India. Look at it how we will, it is an astounding

achievement. "To the Arab nation it was as a birth from darkness into light; Arabia first became alive by means of it. . . . These Arabs, the man Mahomet, and that one century, is it not as if a spark had fallen, one spark, on a world that seemed black unnoticeable sand, but lo, the sand proves explosive powder, blazes heaven-high from Delhi to Granada!" [1]

This is not the rhapsody of a mere rhetorician. Carlyle was far too great an historian to lose touch with fact.

Milman [2] quotes an account of contemporary Arabs taunted with Arabia's poverty, disunion, and ignorance, and answering boldly: "Such were we once. Now we are a new people. . . . God has raised up among us a man, a true prophet. His religion has enlightened our minds, quenched our hatreds, made us a band of brothers under laws dictated by the wisdom of God. He has said, 'Consummate my work: spread the empire of Islam over the whole world: the earth is the Lord's; He has bestowed it on you.'"

Here we have the note that signalizes both the greatness and the danger of a militant religion. It is true that men can be made into a band of brothers by common action and common belief. Mohammed's genius had given his followers a belief in God, a goal for time and eternity, and a clear code, of no insuperable difficulty, to guide them through life. Men linked by the thought that they are carrying out the commands of Absolute Wisdom are of all men most closely linked. And all the closer, we may admit, if war for their faith is added. In the comradeship of a disciplined army, facing the last perils together and undismayed, men find what at their best they most desire—union in willing service for an end that mocks at mere life. This is the germ of truth in the glorification of war. But it is also true, and this truth Mohammedanism did not grasp, that force alone cannot unite men and only too often destroys all unity. The mind is only fettered, not bound, if love and reason do not

[1] Carlyle, "On Heroes and Hero-worship." (The Hero as Prophet.)

[2] "Latin Christianity," Bk. iv. c. 1.

bind it. The dissensions in the early Moslem world, following swiftly on the first brief union, furnish apt enough examples.

Christ's distrust of force, like his reverence for women and his sympathy for suffering, marks one of the leading differences between his doctrine and that of Mohammed. No doubt Christians have incessantly defied his teaching. But it has acted as a check for all that: "Truces of God" have softened barbaric fighting: Quakers have abjured all war: fervent Romanists have hated the temporal power of the Pope. For this reason, among others, there has never been a Caliphate in Christendom, an autocratic authority spiritual and temporal at once. Always the instinct has revived that, in the words of the first English historian of the Church, "The service of Christ ought to be voluntary, not by compulsion" (Bede, c. 26). What this has meant for freedom is incalculable, while it is noteworthy that no Mohammedan country has yet freed itself from despotism. And it is fair to surmise that the aggressions of Mohammedanism in its early period did much to lead Christians still farther astray. War provokes war though waged for the glory of Allah the Compassionate or in the name of the Prince of Peace. The Crusades, however much we may applaud their devotion and the unity of purpose they awakened in Europe itself, did form a link in the chain that has bound the Near East in bonds of desolation to this day. But in comparing the religion of the Koran with the Christianity of the time, we cannot fail also to be struck by likenesses. There is the same burning belief that man is made for something more than physical comfort: that a Power infinitely greater than himself has "created the heavens and the earth in truth," "caused the morning to appear," "ordained the night for rest, and the sun and moon to be the measure of time," sent "the rain from heaven and the springing buds of all things and the grain growing in rows and the palm-trees clustered with dates" (Sale's tr. abridged). And this Power speaks to man directly by the Prophets, bidding him at once submit to the All-powerful Will and stir up his own will to lay hold of Paradise and escape from everlasting Hell.

It is easy to point out the defects in Mohammedanism, but of far greater value to lay stress on its services. Though its morality was less lofty than the Christian it was also less liable to extravagance; its sense of the inadequacy of all human experience did not so easily pass into a contempt of normal human life or inspire distrust of all secular learning: there was indeed no monasticism in early Mohammedanism, —"no monkery in Islam"—rather at first a ready welcome for scientific knowledge and philosophic speculation. And the welcome in the end reacted, strangely and powerfully, on Europe. It was actually through the work of the infidels that the study of Greek thought regained enough strength in Europe to help form, among other mighty structures, the basis for the grandiose Catholicism of the thirteenth century. For, among the Moslems, that conscious corporate activity of which we have already spoken, stimulated, as it has often done, the whole intellect of the people caught up by it, and Moslem philosophers, doctors, mathematicians, seized on what they could in the derelict inheritance of Greek science.

At Cordova in the twelfth century their work reached a climax, and then followed the life-giving touch with Western thought, but even in the time of Charlemagne, both legend and history show us the rival leaders of Islam in contact with the Emperor of Western Christendom not only for war but for peace. Every one knows the story of Roncesvalles, where Charlemagne's rearguard, withdrawn from Spain, was cut to pieces by the Saracens, and Roland, dying, blew his horn in vain. The songs that culminated in the Chanson de Roland at the end of the eleventh century show how deep must have been the impress of the danger to Christendom from the aggressive force of Islam. But Charlemagne also welcomed in peace ambassadors of the more tolerant Haroun al Raschid, the Arab prince ruling in Persia and Syria, and at variance with the Mohammedans in Spain.

There is something charming to the imagination in the intercourse between the two legendary heroes of East and West, "Aaron the Just" sending to Charlemagne treasures of Eastern silk, a mechanical water-clock, the marvel of its

time, a well-beloved elephant, and a message confirming the Franks in the guardianship of the Holy Places of Jerusalem. Here at least "the Good Haroun al Raschid" showed himself ready to follow the wiser and milder texts of the Koran, written, it would seem, before incessant strife had roused the Prophet to glorify war against the Infidels, texts warning the Faithful not to revile even the idols of the idolaters: "We have not appointed thee a keeper over them, neither art thou a guardian over them" (Sale's tr.). "Unto every one of you," so Allah speaks to the men of the Three Religions, Moslems, Jews, and Christians, "unto every one of you have we given a law and an open path, and if God had pleased he had surely made you one people: but he hath thought fit to give you different laws that he might try each of you in what he hath given to each. Therefore strive to excel one another in good works: unto God shall ye all return, and then will he declare unto you that concerning which ye have disagreed."

CHAPTER IX

THE WORK OF CHARLEMAGNE

IT has been said that the chief constructive forces in the Dark Ages are to be found in the Christian Church, Islam, and the Franks; and undoubtedly the Frankish Charlemagne is among the notable organizers of political unity. An epoch is marked by his deliberate, if reluctant, attempt to revive the Roman Empire in the West, an attempt fraught with influences good and bad both for secular and clerical government. Imperialism was re-born and the new-born Papacy confirmed when at Rome on Christmas Day, A.D. 800, Charlemagne rose from his prayers before the altar in the Basilica of St. Peter and suffered Pope Leo to set the crown on his head while the people shouted, "Long life and victory to Carolus Augustus the Good, Giver of peace, crowned by God, Emperor of the Romans!" (Einhard, "Annales," 801).

This alliance with Leo III, who had called in the Frank to help him against the Lombards, made permanent the temporal power of St. Peter's chair, which, ever since the days of Gregory, had been growing in proportion to the growing repugnance felt in Italy against the domination claimed by Constantinople. And if the alliance of new Papacy and revived Empire—the Holy Roman Empire that lasted, in name at least, until the nineteenth century—symbolized, and was long to symbolize, the essential unity of Europe, it was also destined to breed strife and hamper freedom. Charlemagne himself, with all his genius for order, followed the bad precedent of Imperialism in trying to force together nations widely different and

needing wide elbow-room for their own experiments. His methods of "Christianizing" could be as rough as any Moslem's, and much of his huge empire—stretching from the Western shores of France to what is now Hungary in the East and from the mouth of the Northern Elbe to Rome in the South—was only held together by the false cement of fear. We read of men baptized in masses by sheer force and thousands of "traitor" Saxons executed in cold blood.

None the less Charlemagne gave back to Europe an ideal of unity with something Roman, as Bryce observes,[1] in "its striving after the uniformity and precision of a well-ordered administration, which should subject the individual to the system and realize perfection through the rule of law." That ideal was far from being attained, but it was something to have conceived it, still more to have taken steps towards the carrying out of it.

Two efforts of Charlemagne's are typical: first, his appointment of what Hodgkin describes as "imperial commissioners," the *missi dominici*, men who were to travel through his wide dominions controlling the administration of the local counts and generally upholding justice, and next the plans he made to bring some sort of harmony into the divergent laws of the different peoples he ruled. True that these plans, as Einhard notes expressly, were never fulfilled, but at least the Emperor took care that "the laws of all the nations under his control should be put into writing where they were not already written down" ("Caroli Vita," c. 29). Similarly, he was unremitting in his efforts to unify and foster culture. He loved to hear readings from Augustine's "City of God"—a trait which throws light on his reverence for the Church, and indeed on the birth of the *Holy* Roman Empire itself—and at the same time he is the first ruler of whom we are told that he was at pains to have the wild songs of the younger nations recorded and preserved. Unlike Gregory, and like Alfred a century later, he urged the bishops and abbots to study letters and found schools "so that those who desire to please God by living rightly should not neglect to please

[1] "The Holy Roman Empire," v. p. 73.

Him also by speaking correctly." (Letter to Abbot Bagulf, quoted in Robinson's "Readings in European History," Vol. I.)

The Emperor himself, so Einhard his secretary tells us, worked at Latin, Greek, grammar, arithmetic, and astronomy, choosing the best masters he could find East or West in Europe, a certain Peter the Deacon from Pisa and the scholar Alcuin from England. A human touch shows us the old warrior toiling to master writing, keeping the tablets under his pillow and practising at odd moments, though his fingers had grown too stiff ever to succeed.

He stands in history, and with right, as a link between Old and New, both for empire and for culture. He marks both a reminiscence and a rebirth.

CHAPTER X

THE BEGINNINGS OF NEW POETRY

THE Frankish songs which Charlemagne is said to have saved are now, at least in their original "barbaric" form, no longer known to us. But it is hardly fanciful to discern in the scattered poems and legends that do survive from the young life of that growing Europe the signs of new and great literatures arising, literatures on which the world has fed ever since.

And we can mark in them distinct elements of race, Anglo-Saxon, for example, Norman, Celtic. But we should add at once that nothing is more noteworthy in the new literature, or later in the new art, than the intermingling of different races and cultures and the consequent stimulus to feeling and thought. England, France, Italy, the nations that were most prominent in the revival, were all of mixed origin. It has been said that Romance first sprang up in Europe from such comminglings, and at least we can say that they offered it an admirable soil. Poetry, like Philosophy, ever finds a beginning in wonder, and many signs show how deeply the imagination of the new-comers could be stirred by the adventures of the wanderings, the encounter with the mysteries of Christianity, and the august traditions of Rome.

There was a foundation, certainly, and a solid one, of pure native imagination. No mythology is so heroic as that of the pagan North with its gallant vision of Father Odin welcoming to Valhalla, that great hall roofed with golden shields, the warriors who were chosen by his war-maidens to stand beside him on the last grim day when the gods

were to do battle with the giants for the safety of the world. And the Northern poems it inspired are not unworthy of their theme.[1] But the temperament to which such dreams were natural was all the more sensitive to other impressions of immensity. In England, Bede, the historian, himself a scholar trained both in Latin and Greek, writing from his monastery at Jarrow towards the end of the seventh century, tells a famous and lovely story that serves well to illustrate the ready response of these pagans to new light. In Northumbria the King's Council were sitting at debate on the new religion. One of them, a heathen priest, with a frankness that makes no secret of his simple greed, was for choosing the new because the old had brought him no success. But in another there speaks the poetry of our race, not its commercialism. To him the life of man, compared with the unknown worlds before it and behind, seemed short as the flight of a sparrow through a fire-lit hall on a winter's night. The bird flies in from the darkness : it flies out into the darkness again. " Even so we look on this life of ours for a little while, but of what went before or of what is to follow we know nothing. If this new teaching can tell us more, let us follow it."

The Anglo-Saxon poem on the half-mythical hero Beowulf, completed probably in the century of Bede, strikes the same note of adventurous and new-found wonder. The poem itself is probably among the earliest to take on a definite shape, as it is certainly one of the most delightful, among the new heroic songs that are something more than mere lays. They come after a long silence. It is startling to reflect that since the age of the Antonines—half a millennium back—there had been no grand poetry in all the Western world ; scarcely, indeed, any poetry at all. Latin song, never exuberant, had dwindled rapidly as the Early Empire passed into bureaucratic despotism, the echoes of the once glorious music of Hellas weakened and sank as her internecine jealousies sacrificed the last hopes of her liberty ; the sweet singers of Israel were silent after the ruin of their city ; the fiery visions of the Apocalypse, the pitiful pleading of " Esdras " close the majestic series of

[1] Collected in the "Elder Edda.'

those prophecies that are also poems. *Beowulf*, whatever its limitations, shows the promise of a world once more alive to poetry, and that a poetry to stir and touch the heart. Fresh, bold, humorous, it is also, within its range, one of the kindliest of all adventurous songs and softened ever and again by a notable sense of mystery.

Englishmen, in whose land it took final shape and in whose ancestral speech it is written, may be proud to follow its lead. The hero himself is a Geat (probably a Jute from Jutland), but the poem opens with eulogy of "the Warrior-Danes," a distinct nation, if a kindred, and of their renowned leader three generations back, the grey-haired Scyld Scefing, who puts out to sea at his death. And here in the very opening moves a spirit of mystery, recalling, not only the story of the sparrow, but many a dream in later English song, from Langland and Spenser to Wordsworth and Tennyson. We breathe the air of that country where poetry and religious musing meet and dim visions haunt the waking mind. Scyld Scefing had been sent, so the legend ran, mysteriously to his people out of the sea, like Arthur, a child from none knew where.

Now

> "The time had come
> For the greybeard to go
> To the care of the Master."

He calls on his thanes, "his dear comrades," to carry him down to the sea:

> "There rode the ship
> At the edge of the water,
> Outward-bound, gleaming,
> Fit for the hero:
>
> And they laid him there
> On the breast of the ship,
> Piling up treasures,—
> Battle-gear, helmets,
> Spears, bright byrnies,—
> To go with their lord
> In the realms of ocean.
> No ship was ever so fair!

Rich as the jewels
Long ago given
By those who sent him
Over the sea,
A little child
Alone on the flood.

High over his head
They set a gold standard,
And they let the sea take him,
Heavy of heart.

But none ever learnt,
In hall or afield,
Who met that ship and her burthen."
(26 ff.)

It is to the hall of Hrothgar the Dane, descendant of this old hero, the great hall " gold-gleaming, lighting the land," that the royal young Beowulf comes from oversea, in pure love of fame and independent adventure, to free these foreigners from the nightly ravages of the grisly monster, the half-magical sea-bear Grendel. And when the deed is accomplished, both leaders find the crown of it in the friendship it has wrought.

Beowulf speaks to the Danish king :

" This will I say to thee, leader of men !
If ever again
I can do thee service and win thy love,
I shall be ready."

And Hrothgar answers :

" This thou hast done,
Beowulf, my friend !—
Thou hast put friendship between our peoples,
And stilled the envy,
The secret hatred,
Hid in their hearts."

This loving-kindness is as characteristic of Beowulf as the quiet laughter with which he faces, unarmed and relying only on his human strength, the tussle with the monster and his possible " burial " in the creature's maw.

" Grendel will keep me
If I fail ;
He buries the booty, he eats the prey,
Alone, without mercy,
On the blood-stained moor.
No need to care for this corpse of mine !

But send to my kinsman,
If I fall,
The best of the byrniès
I wore in battle :—
The gift of his father
And Weyland's work.
The rest is the Wyrd's :
Let her do as she will."
(445 ff.)

This belief in " the Wyrd," the Northern Goddess of Fate, intertwines, as in so much heroic poetry, with an unflinching confidence in a man's own will :

" Death waits for us all :
Let him who can
First win him renown."
(1387 ff.)

But in this poem it intertwines also with the new faith. At the close Beowulf, old and childless, as he lies dying after his last fight against a monster, the fire-dragon that was destroying his people, gives his battle-gear to his cousin, and himself meets death, awed but expectant :

" Thou art the last
Of all my kindred,
The Wyrd has sent them
To dwell with God.
The brave men are gone,
And I must follow."
(2814 ff.)

We may speak of " Beowulf " for convenience sake as an epic, but its title to the name is doubtful. It has not the wide sweep nor the powerful unifying plot of the true epics, but still it is epic in its strong simplicity, its sense of the value and pathos of man's short life spent in a worthy cause. Such

unity as it has is given by the unity of Beowulf's own character. Self-reliant to a fault, he is the incarnation of free individual enterprise, the new spirit now broad awake in the world. He is a born leader and born explorer, avid of strange adventures and unknown lands:

> "Who trusts himself,
> Let him travel and learn!"

Through the poet's eyes we see the ideal Germanic chief of those early days, a man chosen king not simply because of his race but because he had proved himself royal, a man whose thanes were his comrades, a man who, as Saxon Alfred put it later, would count his honour the less if he were the king of slaves and not free men, a man who delighted in success and the feats of his youth and yet was only the more dauntless for disaster and old age.

> "Thought the bolder, heart the higher,
> Courage the more,
> As our might lessens!"

So sang the poet of Maldon Battle when his lord had defied the Danes and fallen, defeated and dead. The daring freedom of Homeric times has returned, and with it the impulse to heroic song. And after song followed the beginnings of a manly prose.

England in Saxon times is already sufficiently conscious of something approaching the unity of a nation to care for the history of her own people written in her own vernacular. And Alfred, the king who did most for her freedom and unity, carrying on also a hundred years after Charlemagne Charlemagne's work for culture, speaks with a simple forthright voice that shows us the man himself in the style. Very endearing is the naïveté in the paraphrase he made for his people of the sophisticated "Consolations" written by the late Latin Boethius. "Parents," wrote Boethius to comfort the childless, "have been tortured by their children," meaning, of course, by their poignant anxiety for them. So artificial a comfort is not understanded of Alfred. He takes the words literally and adds for his people's sake: "We do not know

when this was done, but we know that it was a wicked deed."

If we hesitate to call "Beowulf" or "Maldon" epic we need have no such scruple about the poem most akin to them, the famous Chanson de Roland, that is to say, in the final form given to the age-long legend by an unknown bard towards the end of the eleventh century. We say "unknown," but Leon Gautier in his admirable edition gives reason for holding that the poem as he prints it is the work of the Norman cleric called Thorold who followed William the Conqueror to England and was appointed by him Abbot of Peterborough. Certain it is that the poem is Norman-French and bears the marks of its long ancestry.

The capable piratical Northmen, already heard of in the time of Charlemagne, and, in 862, summoned by the Slavs of Russia to rule the country, which was "rich and fertile" but "with no order in it," had, by opening of the tenth century, forced their settlement in France from the hands of the central government (912). Quick to learn, they soon absorbed French culture, learning and legend, and for all their independent audacity they could feel the spell of the past and the empires the past had made. Norman and Saxon were close akin by race, but not only is the "Chanson" the work of a far greater genius, we feel also behind it, what we never feel in "Beowulf," the mighty structures of Latin Christianity and Franco-Roman civilization. Instead of naïveté we find high and gracious manners—even at the point of death Roland and Oliver bow with loving courtesy to each other—instead of quaint rhythms and a childlike bareness of diction (as of a baby giant) we find a developed language, sinewy and free, and a measure among the stateliest ever fashioned in France :—

> "Halt sunt li pui et tenebrus et grant."
> ("High are the peaks, and shadow-gloomed, and vast").
> (Wyndham's tr.)

Again, instead of a free-lance adventurer we have the splendour of a feudal monarch, whose subjects, however proud and beloved, are at least as much his servants as his friends. It is Oliver's most poignant regret that neither he nor Roland

will ever again be able to serve Charles, the mightiest king who ever reigned (1727 ff.), and with his last breath he prays for the Emperor and " Francë dulcë " (2015 ff.).

There are passages in the poem that would suit to a nicety the men of Napoleon's *vieille garde,* with their memories of the *Grande Armée,* and their proud devotion to the man who ruled all but the whole of the European world. The political background is no longer a loose arrangement of independent tribes. It is a great and imperial country, " le grand pays " (*tere majur*), claiming European rule and defying the huge host of the Paynims.

The Christian religion has become an organized certainty. Scyld Scefing in " Beowulf " had set sail for the unknown, but the poet of Roland and Oliver knows quite well whither the souls of his heroes are travelling and how they are to go. So far as in them lies, the paladins perform the last rites of the Church, and God sends His angels, St. Gabriel, St. Raphael, and St. Michael, " of the guarded mount," to carry the spirit of Roland to Paradise. We are in the atmosphere of the Crusades, and indeed the poet himself may well have known of the First Crusade and shared the indignation and alarm aroused in Europe by the coming of the fierce Turks in place of the milder Arabs.

Further, we may recognize, perhaps, in the very fabric of the poem that genius for unity and order developed so early by these Northerners under the influence of Roman tradition. It is at any rate remarkable that the men who were to be among the strongest rulers and builders of their time should at the outset produce a true epic with a plot at once broad and coherent far above its possible compeers. The mere outline of it shows this.

Charlemagne, after seven years of victory in Spain, is persuaded to retire by false promises sent from the Moslem king. Roland, Charlemagne's nephew and finest soldier, suspects the offer, but Ganelon, Roland's father-in-law, who proves traitor in the end, urges acceptance, and Charlemagne, with certain reservations, accepts. Then comes the question : Who shall go to the Moslems on the return embassy, which may be

full of peril? Roland and Oliver both volunteer, but the king will not hear of it: their lives are too precious to be risked. Then Roland proposes Ganelon as one of the wisest and doughtiest barons, and the choice is approved by the court and confirmed by the king. But Ganelon is furious: Why should his life be held of less account than his son-in-law's? Treacherous himself, he suspects Roland of playing him false and threatens him with undying hate. Roland answers with a proud and chilling courtesy, a cool confidence that only exasperates Ganelon the more. He goes on the embassy, but keeps his vow of vengeance. A dastardly attack is concerted between him and the Moslems, to be delivered on Charlemagne's rearguard, which Ganelon intends shall be led by Roland. He returns to his lord with fair words from the Saracens, and the withdrawal is agreed upon, Roland commanding the rearguard at Ganelon's suggestion. Though not suspecting treachery, both Roland and Charlemagne discern the malice in the proposal, but Roland's pride is up and he insists on accepting the perilous station. The same fierce self-reliance makes him refuse Charlemagne's offer of additional support, and later, when attacked by the Moslems, refuse to blow the horn for help, although Oliver, a Patroclus to his Achilles, urges him once and again to do so in time. In the end he does blow it, but too late to save himself or his men. Few passages in literature are more deservedly famous. Oliver's reproach to him for his delay:

> "Vostrë proeccë, Roland, mar la veïsmes."
> ("Your valour, Roland, has been ill for us.") (1731)

Oliver's flashing wrath at the thought of blowing the horn after all only to reveal their failure, Archbishop Turpin's wise and calm advice, reconciling the friends so that the horn is sounded at last and Charlemagne, far off on the borders of "France la douce," hears it and knows that his dearest and best are in mortal peril and turns back in burning haste—all this is worthy to be compared with Homer. Oliver's very words, putting his finger on the tragic pride that had destroyed them all, offer a striking parallel to Hector's

bitter self-reproach when he stands outside the Skaian Gate to meet his doom, because he knows that his rashness has led to the disaster at the Ford, and he cannot bear to face his countrymen and hear them mutter, " Hector trusted to his own valour and destroyed the people."

Charlemagne and his army come too late for succour but not too late for vengeance, and that vengeance is taken with a pitilessness markedly different from the kindly temper of " Beowulf." There is no hint of torture in the Anglo-Saxon poem, and there are several passages praising mercy. But Ganelon is torn to pieces by wild horses, and the poet goes out of his way to approve the cruel punishment :

> " Guenes est morz cumë fel recreant.
> Ki traïst altrë, nen est dreiz qu'il s'en vant."
>
> (" So Ganelon died a foul traitor's death ;
> No traitor should have cause to boast his deed.") (3973)

Such were these Normans, poetic, powerful, haughty, passionate, fiercely jealous of individual renown and yet acknowledging Suzerain and Church as supreme. Their poetry is a strong shoot from that mighty Northern tree which had already produced the rich mythology of Odin and Valhalla, of the Giants and the Dwarfs, the Volsungs and Nibelungs—a mythology made alive once more for ignorant moderns by the magic of Wagner's music.

Thus, if England has done great things in poetry, it need scarcely surprise us when we remember that the Conquest brought a second infusion of Northern blood and Northern legend to the descendants of Beowulf's comrades.

Furthermore, the other main element in the blended English stock, the Celtic, was itself rich in poetry. Celtic imagination was of another character, more fanciful, more extravagant if you will, wilder and fiercer, but with its own poignant sweetness of love and wailing, its own exquisite notes of elfin wonder. A modern Irish poet, himself dowered with many of its fairy gifts, speaks as a denizen of that strange world when he tells us " its events and people are wild, and are like unbroken horses, that are so much more beautiful than horses

that have learnt to run between shafts." And Yeats goes on to contrast this marvellous moonlit atmosphere with the actuality of the Icelandic Sagas where the fallen fighter draws out the weapon that has killed him, looks at it with a grin —" These broad spears are coming into fashion "—and dies.[1]

Each reader must choose for himself which he prefers, but the wise will give thanks for both and recognize the two well-springs that have fed the full river of English song. The sovereign loveliness of Keats's imagination,

> " Strange ministrant of undescribèd sounds,
> That come a-swooning over hollow grounds,
> And wither drearily on barren moors,"

finds a real, if childlike, forerunner in the wistful tenderness that enfolds the first meeting between Deirdre the Beautiful and her lover Naoisë under the menace of coming doom. Naoisë and his two brothers are strolling on the hillside, when Deirdre sees them from her palace-prison and her heart goes out to Naoisë, and she follows them. His two brothers see her first, and they dread her beauty, because she has been chosen as a bride by Conchubar, the High King of Ulster.

" Ainnlë and Ardan had heard talk of the young girl that was at Conchubar's Court, and it is what they thought, that if Naoisë their brother would see her, it is for himself he would have her, for she was not yet married to the King. So when they saw Deirdre coming after them, they said to one another to hasten their steps, for they had a long road to travel, and the dusk of night coming on. They did so, and Deirdre knew it, and she cried out after them, ' Naoisë, son of Usnach, are you going to leave me ? ' ' What cry was that came to my ears, that it is not well for me to answer, and not easy for me to refuse ? ' said Naoisë. ' It was nothing but the cry of Conchubar's wild ducks,' said his brothers ; ' but let us quicken our steps and hasten our feet, for we have a long road to travel, and the dusk of the evening coming on.' They did so, and they were widening the distance between them-

[1] W. B. Yeats in the Preface to Lady Gregory's " Cuchulain of Muirthemne," from which the following rendering is taken.

selves and her. Then Deirdre cried, 'Naoisë! Naoisë! son of Usnach, are you going to leave me?' 'What cry was it that came to my ears and struck my heart, that it is not well for me to answer nor easy to refuse?' said Naoisë. 'Nothing but the cry of Conchubar's wild geese,' said his brothers; 'but let us quicken our steps and hasten our feet, the darkness of night is coming on.' They did so and they were widening the distance between themselves and her. Then Deirdre cried the third time, 'Naoisë! Naoisë! son of Usnach, are you going to leave me?' 'What sharp, clear cry was that, the sweetest that ever came to my ears, and the sharpest that ever struck my heart, of all the cries I ever heard?' said Naoisë. 'What is it but the scream of Conchubar's lake swans?' said his brothers. 'That was the third cry of some person beyond these,' said Naoisë, 'and I swear by my hand of valour,' he said, 'I will go no further until I see where the cry comes from.' So Naoisë turned back and met Deirdre, and Deirdre and Naoisë kissed one another three times and she gave a kiss to each of his brothers. And with the confusion that was on her, a blaze of red fire came upon her, and her colour came and went as quickly as the aspen by the stream. And it is what Naoisë thought to himself that he never saw a woman so beautiful in his life; and he gave Deirdre, there and then, the love that he never gave to living thing, to vision, or to creature, but to herself alone."

The original underlying that was composed in Ireland, so Irish scholars tell us,[1] either in the seventh century or the eighth—and therefore about the same time as "Beowulf"—by bards from the Gaelic branch of the primitive Celtic stock. At that date indeed Ireland, in spite of her bitter internal warfare, held a foremost place in poetry, religion, and scholarship.

But there were also other Celts in Britain itself, Britons of Wales and Cornwall, for example, and they, together with the allied Britons of French Brittany, had their own wealth of legend and poetry, from which grew up by degrees a cycle of romances that have enchanted Europe ever since, the cycle

[1] *e.g.* Alfred Nutt in the note to Lady Gregory's trans., *op. cit.*

of Arthur the King and his Knights of the Round Table. In their developed form we can see that these tales brought two fresh and fertile themes into European literature, first the struggle between loyalty and romantic love—as in the tales of Tristan and Iseult, Lancelot and Guinevere—and then, linked and contrasted with romantic love, the thirst for a religious purity unattainable on earth, as in the Quest of the Holy Grail.[1] But this developed form does not appear till the twelfth century, and we must leave it till later. Let us glance meanwhile at the broader political movements since Charlemagne.

[1] See A. Lang, "Hist. of English Lit.," pp. 60, 61 (ed. 1912).

CHAPTER XI

THE FEUDAL EMPIRE, THE CHURCH, AND THE YOUNG NATIONS

THE outstanding features of the political growth from the ninth century to the twelfth are the emergence of the European nations in something like their modern form, the fact of feudalism (the passion and the loyalty of which are vividly reflected in the *Chanson*), and the first critical struggle between Empire and Papacy.

Charlemagne's huge empire split asunder soon after his death, to be divided, in a manner noted by all historians as significant, between his three grandsons, Lothair, eldest-born and Emperor, Louis the German, and Charles. The brothers quarrelled savagely over their shares, but in 843 a temporary settlement was made by the Treaty of Verdun, precursor of many another equally abortive.

The main outlines, indeed, of France (under Charles) and Germany (under Louis) were destined to be permanent, but the border-lands between, which fell to Lothair (and one of which, Lorraine, took its name from him), were to excite the cupidity of the other two countries all down the centuries. Lothair as Emperor had also feudal lordship over the North of Italy, and for nearly a century the Imperial power was in fact held by a descendant of Charlemagne. But during the whole time it was held more and more slackly, and this weakening was increased by the very nature of the feudalism now becoming prominent.

Under feudalism the mere holding of land, always an advantage to the possessor, carried with it additional and

excessive powers. The landowner, though a vassal of the king, and therefore in strict feudal theory not the ultimate *owner*, could be, in his own territory, " a ruler and a judge, a commander of troops, even a collector of taxes." [1]

It is obvious what confusion and disorder might arise when these petty " kingdoms within a kingdom " were uncontrolled ; but obvious also how natural was their growth in a time of individual enterprise and incessant warfare, a time also when communications were of the scantiest, and the central government was none of the strongest. The whole political history of the next few centuries is coloured by the fact of feudalism, and the efforts in different lands to build out of its jarring elements a stable government under which men could recognize one another as united in the same community and obeying the same laws.

Owing to the supremacy of the king such a unification was possible, but it was essentially a unification that worked through privilege and thus essentially incomplete. And from that incompleteness was to spring a crop of injustice and revolution, a crop the whole of which is not yet gathered in.

Such as it was, the unification was a heavy task and one not always achieved. In Germany, for example, during the century after Charlemagne, the country was divided into four great Duchies—Saxony, Franconia, Swabia, Bavaria, —or, if Lorraine is included, five. These were practically independent, though ready to acknowledge an overlord, who was for many years a Franconian, with all the prestige of the Franks.

But the first quarter of the tenth century was marked by the accession to the kingship of Saxony's duke, Henry the Fowler, great-great-grandson through the female line of Charlemagne, and a man, it seems clear, of considerable force and ability, indeed a typical Saxon of the time in his organizing power. For the Saxons, once Charlemagne's most doughty foes, proved to be his most remarkable successors. Henry, nominated by the late king, the Franconian Conrad, was chosen largely through the united support of his own race and

[1] Grant, " History of Europe," Part II, c. vi.

the Franconians, winning the allegiance of the rest through skilful concessions to local independence, and through the renown of his victories against the still heathen barbarians on the East and South-East. He resumed the pioneer work of Charlemagne, half conquest, half civilization, thrusting back the Magyars, successors of the Avars and the Huns, towards the land now called Hungary, crossing the Elbe and conquering territory from the Slavs, notably the land that was to be the March of Brandenburg, and, centuries later, the home of the Hohenzollerns, when they had travelled upwards from the South.

Vivid lights on the German temperament in these days may be found in the epic of the *Nibelungenlied*, put together later, probably in the twelfth century, but going back through the folk-lore of many centuries both to primitive Northern mythology and to historic echoes of the Hunnish power. Unruly, savage, greedy, and treacherous, so do the leaders appear in this long string of poems—a work that is indeed far less subtle and moving than the parallel version farther north, the Volsung Saga of Scandinavia ; but they appear also endowed with surpassing daring and resolution. Magnificent in its fierceness is the defiance between Hagen, who has slain the unsuspecting hero Siegfried, and Siegfried's widow Kriemhild, who has married Etzel (Attila), the King of the Huns, in order to compass her terrible vengeance and lured to his court her own brothers with Hagen in their train. The proud loyalty of a willing vassal flames out in Hagen's reply when the mocking queen uncovers her deadly purpose :

" She said, ' Now tell me, Sir Hagen, who sent for thee, that thou hast dared to ride into this land ? Wert thou in thy senses, thou hadst not done it.'

" ' None sent for me,' answered Hagen. ' Three knights that I call master were bidden hither. I am their liegeman, and never yet tarried behind when they rode to a hightide.'

" She said, ' Now tell me further. Wherefore didst thou that which hath earned thee my hate ? Thou slewest Siegfried, my dear husband, whom I cannot mourn enow to my life's end.'

" He answered, ' Enough ! . . . It was I, Hagen, that slew Siegfried, the hero. . . . Avenge it who will, man or woman.' " (Tr. by Margaret Armour.)

It needed the strength of a Charlemagne to bring order among men and women like that, but the vigour of them is undeniable. Henry the Fowler and Henry's son Otto I, Otto the Great, toil on at the work. They have at least some personal loyalty to work on and abundant spirit for fighting. Otto and his warriors defeated the Magyars in a decisive battle on the Lech, due west of Munich, (955), and thereupon he established, among other " Marks " intended to guard the frontier, the Bavarian " East Mark " that was to grow into the " Eastern Kingdom," the *Oester-reich*, the *Austria* of a later day. Finally in 962 he was crowned Emperor at Rome. There were many reasons for this attempt of Otto's to make the Holy Roman Empire once more an effective power,[1] among them the memory of Charlemagne and the past, the distracted state of Italy herself, torn by civil strife, devastated in the North by Magyars, attacked in the centre and South by Moslems, and suffering spiritually from the shameful position of the Papacy, at once corrupt and weak, and yet still an invaluable symbol to all Christians of Christendom's essential unity, Otto, moreover, needed the help of the clergy in struggling against his own barons for a unified and settled government. To counter the growth of powerful and insubordinate families he endowed the celibate bishops in his realm with much territory and wide administrative powers. These bishops he appointed himself, and on this matter centred many a desperate conflict between his successors and the Popes.

For now comes into full sight another dominant feature of the Middle Ages, the struggle, namely, between the Temporal

[1] The actual title " Holy," according to Bryce (*op. cit.* c. xii.), is not known to have been used before the time of Frederick I (in 1157). But the idea, dependent on the union of Empire and Papacy as leaders of Christendom, goes back to Charlemagne, and behind him again to St. Augustine and indeed to the official acceptation of Christianity as the religion of the Empire.

and Spiritual Powers, a struggle which goes down to the root-problems of government and society. Once understood, it is impossible not to sympathize with the ideals of both parties, however selfish their contest for mastery. Through the confused and sordid turmoil we discern great issues at stake and difficulties not to be solved completely while man remains imperfect.

For, in the first place, many of man's finest purposes cannot be served by force. Religion, for example, is worthless if it does not spring from the heart, and the heart cannot be forced. On the other hand, for a community to hold together with justice in this faulty world, there must be some means of chastising those flagrant wrong-doers who seek to prey upon it. Force therefore, if only the force of expulsion, seems unavoidable as a last resort in any organized political State, but force, even if it makes men act rightly, runs the risk, since it works by threat, of making them act from wrong motives, especially if it is used, as it often is used, not merely to make men do what they admit to be their duty, but actually what they believe to be wrong. Now it is true that though this was not clearly realized by Christian Europe for many centuries, it was felt obscurely from the first, and hence the Temporal and Spiritual Powers, even when allied, were, on the whole, kept distinct in Christendom. The Church did not always forget the lesson of her Founder that His kingdom was not of this world, and that not force, but persuasion, was her allotted instrument.

But sometimes, and very often, she did. Nor can we altogether blame her. If a great society believes itself the guardian of vital truth, truth that guides conduct and leads to infinite happiness, while the neglect of it means everlasting torture, the temptation is strong to use the fatal short-cut of force, in the hope that, even if the obstinate are not cured, at least the poison of the infected may not infect others. Even in the modern State, with the experience of centuries behind us and without the spectre of eternal damnation before us, is there anyone who could claim that we have yet mastered the right uses or learnt the just limits of force ? Moreover, these

limits change with the changing conscience of man. Most of us welcome compulsion now in the cause of secular education, but, if we do, we ought not to be horrified at compulsion in mediæval times for religious training. To the average mediæval conscience, the ordinances of the Church were not only right, but essential. Indeed, we can best understand both the breadth and the narrowness of the Mediæval Church, her influence, and the hostility she aroused, if we think of her as what she claimed, not without cause, to be, the Supreme Educator, teaching not only for time but for eternity, pointing out to men the highest life conceivable, and showing them the only path towards it.

Naturally, in common with all educators who work through institutions, she felt the need, and the temptation, both of independence and of power. This can be seen alike in the work of the monasteries and of the prelates, notably in the striking figure of the Italian Hildebrand, Pope under the name of Gregory the Seventh (1073). Hildebrand himself began life as a monk,[1] and throughout was in close touch with the great house of Cluny, the reforming monastery founded in Burgundy at the opening of the previous century (910), although there are signs that he went beyond the Cluniac leaders in his zeal for the powers of the Roman See.

To correct the corruption rife among too many of the clergy, Hildebrand saw that strict discipline was needed from within, and that such discipline was impossible if the appointment of the bishops was practically in the hands of a layman. Hence his first concern was to challenge this claim on the part of the Emperors. The Emperors must not "invest" the bishops on their own authority. It was a spiritual matter, and to be dealt with by the Church. Here at once he came into conflict

[1] This has been questioned by a few moderns, but to doubt it seems not only a needless setting aside of tradition but exceedingly difficult to justify in face of Henry IV's public letter to Hildebrand as "jam non apostolico sed falso monacho," and his indictment of him as a disgrace to the "monachica professio" (Migne, Patr. Lat. S. Greg. VII. Ad Concilium Romanum III Additio, p. 794). Otto of Freising reports a tradition that Hildebrand was at one time Prior of Cluny, but this is now generally disbelieved.

with the young and headstrong Emperor, the German Henry IV, and here he was on strong ground.

But, in point of fact, Gregory went much further, and virtually claimed that in view of the Church's sacred character the Pope must be recognized as the ultimate Head of the State and of all States. In the second sentence of excommunication passed on Henry IV, he prays for all the world to understand that inasmuch as the blessed Apostles Peter and Paul, the sainted Fathers and Princes of the Church, could bind in heaven and loose in heaven, even so on earth they could "grant or take away from any man, according to his desert, empires, kingdoms, principalities, dukedoms, marches, counties, and all other possessions whatsoever." They were rulers in spiritual things: what must be their power in temporal things? They were to judge angels, what might they not do with men? "Let all kings and all princes of the earth learn to-day how mighty ye are and what your power is: let them tremble, and mock no longer at the commandments of your Church."[1]

It is obvious, as Bryce[2] points out, that claims such as these made civil government all but impossible. One is scarcely surprised at the Emperor's fury with a man of this temper, at his sneer that in Hildebrand was exemplified the typical priest drunk with power, of whom his precursor, Gregory the truly Great, had spoken. Writing before the excommunication, but provoked beyond endurance by Hildebrand's lordly tone over the question of the investitures, and at least as eager as Hildebrand himself for power, Henry takes upon him to dethrone the Pope. St. Peter, the true Pope, had written: "Fear God and honour the King." "St. Paul would not have spared an angel from heaven had he preached another gospel," and the unworthy Gregory, because he has slighted the will of the Emperor, the appointed of God, has brought himself under St. Paul's curse, "damned in the eyes of all our bishops and in our own." Henry, in set terms, bids his opponent come down from the Apostolical seat that he has disgraced.

[1] Migne, Patr. Lat. Concil. Romanum VII.
[2] "The Holy Roman Empire," c. x.

The letter from which these aggressive words are taken makes a super-Pope of the Emperor, and it is not surprising that the actual Pope retaliated. Henry's claims are at least as arrogant as Hildebrand's own. Nor was it possible to support them in the eyes of Christendom. The impossibility became manifest even to Henry when the chief barons of Germany seized the opportunity to revolt. He was forced to submit and undergo his humiliation before the Pope among the snows of Canossa (1077). Gregory himself wrote in triumph "to all the Archbishops, Bishops, Dukes, Counts and Princes in the German Realm who defend the Christian faith," recounting how the king, humbled to penance, had obtained pardon and absolution, having come "of his own accord . . . with no hostility or arrogance in his bearing to the town of Canusium where we were tarrying. And there, laying aside all the trappings of royalty, he stood in wretchedness, barefooted, . . . clad in woollen, for three days before the gate of the castle, and implored with much weeping the aid and consolation of the apostolic mercy, until he had moved all who saw or heard of it to such pity and depth of compassion that they interceded for him with many prayers and tears and wondered at the unaccustomed hardness of our heart; some even protested that we were displaying not the seriousness of apostolical displeasure but the cruelty of tyrannical ferocity." [1]

Henry's humiliation, however, was not for long. The tide soon turned; Christendom did not at bottom desire a Caliphate, and indeed the close of the last quotation from Gregory himself indicates that already there were devout sons and daughters of the Church who thought he had gone too far. Among these may have been Hugh, the Abbot of Cluny, and Matilda, the Countess of Tuscany, who were witnesses of the hollow reconciliation. Henry gathered his forces again and returned to the attack in a manner suggesting that his parade of penance had been rather diplomatic than real. The city of Rome itself

[1] Translation based on that of Robinson, "Readings in European History," i. p. 283. Original in Migne, Patr. Lat. S. Greg. Registrum, Lib. iv., Epistola xii.

turned against Gregory; he was forced to retreat, under shelter of the Normans from the South, even out of the acknowledged Papal dominions and died, embittered but indomitable. "I have loved righteousness and hated iniquity: therefore I die in exile."

Still the struggle about the Church appointments went on until a compromise was arranged by the Concordat of Worms (1122); the Emperor giving up the claim to invest the bishops with the spiritual symbols of ring and staff or to control the elections, while, on the other hand, the elections were to be held in his presence, and the clergy were to do homage to him for their temporal possessions.

Like all compromises, the Concordat has been claimed as a victory for either side, but it is perhaps best looked upon as an admission, reluctant and incomplete yet significant, that not supremacy but co-operation is the fundamental secret of society. The sovereign Emperor must admit that a community may exist inside the political community with special rights and privileges of its own, free from his incessant interference; the leaders of the Church must allow that not creed but common work on a common soil is to be the predominant force in fusing men into nations, and they must make their terms with that.

Both sides were slow to learn, but gradually the struggle for "the temporalities" on the part of the Popes was more and more confined to Italy, the nation from which, as a rule, the Popes were drawn. There were eddies, it is true, as is evident from the dominating position of Innocent III, more than seventy years later. Hildebrand had boldly claimed feudal overlordship in England, but he could not press the claim when met by the curt refusal of William the Conqueror:

"I never intended and I do not intend now to swear fealty to you. I never promised it, nor can I find that my predecessors ever did so." [1]

[1] "Fidelitatem facere vobis nec volo: quia nec promisi, nec antecessores meos antecessoribus tuis id fecisse comperio." Migne, *op. cit.*

Innocent III revives the claim and exacts submission from King John. Yet in the end it is only to be repudiated by the growing national feeling of England.

That potent spirit had indeed been growing everywhere, and in Italy and Germany it complicates the struggle between Emperor and Pope. For, however much the Italians may have sympathized with the ideal of a united Christian Empire, the head of which should stand above all the separate States, they could not fail to resent the pressure on themselves of an Emperor who was in practice invariably a German.

Especially was this felt in the towns, throbbing with a vivid and turbulent life that recalls the cities of Greece, both in their artistic achievements and in their aggressive independence. Even to look at the splendid architecture of Italy in the twelfth century is almost enough to make us understand how the cities rose against the claims of, say, Frederick Barbarossa (Emperor 1152). The modern reader cannot share the obvious belief of Barbarossa's uncle, Otto, Bishop of Freising, in the righteousness of the custom that "when the Emperor enters Italy all magistracies and offices are suspended, and all things are regulated by his will, acting in accordance with the instructions of the law and the decisions of the jurists." It is the Imperial tradition revived in its most despotic, if legalist form, and inevitably it came into conflict with the revived Republican principle of free self-government in the cities. Otto himself, who thought much on government, recognized that cities such as Milan deliberately modelled themselves on "the greatness of ancient Rome." "Indeed," he goes on, "they love liberty so well that, to guard against the abuse of power, they prefer to be governed by consuls rather than by princes." He is shocked by their admitting to knighthood and office "men of the lowest and most mechanical trades who, among other peoples, are shunned like the pest by those who follow higher callings." Yet he says in so many words that "it is owing to this that they surpass all other cities of the world in riches and power."

Citizens of this type fiercely resented the Imperial claim to override their decisions, as well as the exaction of a crushing

tribute " whenever the kings decided to visit Italy." Nor were they conciliated by what Otto tries to justify as the inevitable result of their insubordination, when " those cities, towns, and castles which ventured either to refuse the tax altogether or had paid it only in part " were " razed to the ground as a warning to posterity."[1]

In point of fact the historic warning—which Otto did not live to see—was given to the Emperor himself (and to all those who try to hold down an alien and unwilling people by sheer force). The towns of Northern Italy formed themselves into the " Lombard League," defied the Redbeard who had seemed unconquerable, and defeated him. The Pope (with whom he had quarrelled) supported them, and in 1177, under the porch of St. Mark's at Venice, Frederick submitted to the Pope as the supreme reconciler.

" It was just a hundred years since the great humiliation of Canossa, and this was a humiliation almost as complete. He knelt before the Pope and begged for his forgiveness, and when the Pope mounted his mule he held the stirrup and would have held the bridle if the Pope had not declined the compliment." [2]

But the real humiliation was rather before the cities than the Church, to which indeed Barbarossa had always professed devotion : " The cities were now recognized as practically independent ; they governed themselves ; they had their own armies, their own fortifications, their own jurisdiction." [3]

So ended the most brilliant attempt since Charlemagne to unify Italy and Central Europe under one sovereign head. A century later, indeed, another effort, and a brilliant one also, was made by Barbarossa's grandson, Frederick II, Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, and lord of Naples and Sicily through his Norman mother Constance, heiress of the bold adventurers who had fought the Saracens and made themselves rulers in the land under the overlordship of the Pope, even before the Norman invasion of England. But Frederick II's

[1] Otto von Freising, " Deeds of Frederick," Book II. c. 13. (Translation based on that of Robinson, *op. cit.*)

[2] Grant, " History of Europe," p. 280. [3] *Op. cit.*

attempt failed in its turn. His despotic temper roused the Northern Communes of Italy once more, and once more the Papacy was wise enough to support the people against the despot. It had reasons of its own for this. Frederick, once its candidate for Empire, had shown himself not only an audacious speculator in religion, but a far too ambitious Empire-builder, prepared, in defiance of solemn engagements given personally, to grip the Popedom between his Northern and Southern dominions. The struggle was undecided at his death (1250), but soon afterwards his whole dynasty was swept away, the power of it being nowise founded on liberty, and his race being dogged to its doom by the hatred of the Popes, a hatred kept alive through fear. Naples and Sicily were left to be for centuries the prize of war between French and Spanish claimants.

These repeated and vain attempts to unite Italy and Germany under one Empire were costly to both. The Emperor's constant absence from home, across the Alps in Italy, made it impossible for him to cope with his own turbulent barons, and the chance of a solid union in Germany disappeared for many a long day. In particular is to be noted the increasing chaos in her judicial courts. The faint promise of a coherent system embodying popular elements died away in a confusion of separate jurisdictions, largely feudal and seignorial, left, moreover, without the guidance either of a clear and consistent law or a uniform body of judges appointed from above.

There was rich material for corporate life in mediæval Germany, as we shall have occasion to note later, but it was lost through lack of any unifying policy. The early history of the Holy Roman Empire is strewn with lost opportunities for Germany, notably in connexion with the towns. The development of the towns, so important for the growth of modern life, so characteristic of the leading European nations in the thirteenth century, and recalling so significantly the city-states of Greece and Rome, was as marked in Germany as elsewhere. The reawakening desire and need both for commerce and life in common had led the townsmen either to take for

themselves (as in Italy), or more often (as in England) to win by definite grants the right to definite liberties and even to a large measure of self-government. Freedom from all serfage was one of the foremost privileges, and the principle that he who had lived in a free city for a year and a day became a free man whoever his lord might have been, one of the great forces for general emancipation in Europe, found popular expression in a German proverb, "*Die Luft der Stadt macht frei.*" The townsmen, moreover, were organizing themselves into guilds of craftsmen and traders and struggling with what we should now call economic problems—how, for example prices should be fixed: whether solely by the cost of the materials *plus* a fair reward for the craftsman's labour, or whether an additional sum might be asked when the commodity was in high demand—problems to be debated in our own time with a renewed and deepened intensity. Arts and letters, furthermore, clustered in the city. When we deplore the evil side of the towns we should remember also that many of our finest achievements have been made possible only through them. "Not through the mighty woods we go, but through the mightier cities."

In the young vigour of these early German efforts a wise and bold ruler might have found a factor of the highest value for uniting the country on a basis of freedom. The privileges of the towns might have been confirmed and developed on the understanding that they were to co-operate with the king in maintaining order and serving the nation at large. Frederick II in particular had the chance offered to him. But on his rare visits to Germany his policy seems to have been nothing but narrowly opportunist, playing off the barons against the cities and the cities against the barons simply to suit the apparent convenience of the moment, the broad result being to leave chaos and conflict to the German people.

Across the Alps, on the other hand, no Teutonic Emperor could really identify himself with his Italian subjects. Had the Holy Roman Empire been effectively established in Italy by a German it would probably have been only a

despotism, militarist and external. We cannot regret its failure, though we may regret, and deeply, that the struggle for and against it left either people rather a congeries of jealous units than a united society, and Empire and Papacy profoundly embittered against each other.

On the Italian side Dante, and on the German Vogelweide (d. 1230) cried out each on the distraction of his country. Walther von der Vogelweide, perhaps the loveliest of the Minnesingers, was a patriot and a man of religion as well as a true poet. His passion for the welfare, unity, and freedom of his fatherland was every whit as spontaneous and strong as his passion for love and beauty. The coronets of the barons, he protested earnestly, were outblazing the light of the Crown; the realm had less order in it than the animal kingdom; and the disorder was fomented by the Italian Popes, a schemer like Innocent III keeping two German candidates in play and cheating both. Vogelweide foresaw even at that date a breach between clergy and laity and the consequent break-up of Christendom.

> "O German people, that this should be,
> The hive with a king, and kingless we!
> O German people, hear my cry!
> The coronets carry themselves too high!
> Let the lonely Jewel of the Crown
> Outblaze them all on Philip's Throne!"

> "I heard the lies they told in Rome.
> I saw them cheat two kings at home.
> Clergy and laymen fell to strife,
> The bitterest known in all this life:
> The clergy strove and struggled sore,
> But the laymen numbered more and more. . . .
> Evil in cloister-garth and cell,—
> A good monk wept, as I heard tell,
> He cried to God, for his heart was wrung,
> 'Alas, the Pope is rash and young!
> May Christ have mercy on Christendom!'"

Vogelweide is sensitive to the whole of life, and at times his breadth of view strangely anticipates Goethe's. Fervent pilgrim as he was, he can think of God as receiving the prayers of all creeds.

"Christian and Jew and Heathen serve Him
Who gives the bread of life to all."

His protest against the selfishness of the struggles for dominance in Church and State was unavailing, but it remains of enduring significance.

CHAPTER XII

ENGLAND AND THE PROMISE OF SELF-GOVERNMENT

OF all the young nations England, from a political point of view, showed the fairest promise. Spain was divided between Christian and Moslem. Russia was flung back, and for centuries, by the Tartar invasion (1223), and so was left far in the rear even of the civilization attained by her sister country of Poland, already organized into a kingdom. France, like Germany, though as yet without Germany's temptation to waste her strength beyond the Alps, was split up among quarrelsome vassals, although a nucleus of the future kingdom began to form itself at the end of the tenth century round Hugh Capet, successor to the degenerate Carolingian line.

But in England less than a hundred years later, the Norman conquerors had the ability and the luck to enlist in their service both the Saxon strength and the Celtic fire of their new subjects. From the first, indeed, Norman William took the line that he was not an alien conqueror so much as the rightful heir of the Saxon king, Edward the Confessor. The chief pitfall of feudalism he avoided by ensuring, first, that none of his barons held too much land in any one place, the possessions he granted them being scattered about over England. And, next, that landowners should swear fealty direct to himself, and so guard against the divided loyalties which grew up thickly on the Continent and increased the chaos. The direct evidence of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle is worth repeating: "All the men of consequence who were on the land all over England, whosesoever men they were, all

bowed down to him and became his men and swore oaths of fealty to him that they would be faithful to him against all other men." [1]

The "good order," a requisite of any real unity, that William brought into the country is also clear from the reluctant admiration of the Chronicler. "A man of substance might walk through the realm with his bosom full of gold and come to no harm. Nor durst any man slay another though he had done him never so much evil."

William's work for justice and unification was carried further by Henry II. grandson indeed of a Norman, Henry I, but also of a princess with Saxon and Celtic blood, Edith (called Matilda), daughter of Malcolm the Scottish king and niece of Edgar Ætheling. In 1166, just a hundred years after the Conquest and eleven before Barbarossa's defeat, we can trace in the Assize of Clarendon the beginnings of our modern trial by jury. Only the beginnings, it is true. Neither the Saxon trial by ordeal nor the Norman wager of battle did Henry set aside, nor was the "jury" he established a real jury of judgment. What was done was to provide that in criminal cases twelve men sworn to speak the truth should be appointed to make a preliminary inquiry, and if they considered the evidence grave enough to present the accused for trial, then, though he should go to the ordeal, the sceptical king added that whatever the result, he must leave the country within forty days on pain of death.

The growth, uninterrupted, of a true jury system from such small beginnings is a classic instance of the value in getting a rational scheme started, on however small a scale, in place of an irrational. In civil cases also a jury was allowed as an alternative to wager by battle. And "from admitting that after all Might was not Right, it was but a short step to agree that Chance was not Justice. Trial by battle fell into disuse, and soon afterwards trial by ordeal followed it. In 1216 the Church forbade the further use of ordeal." [2] This

[1] Tr. based on Gardiner's in the "Student's History of England."

[2] "The Groundwork of British History," Warner and Martin, c.x. *fin.*

experience between individuals within the nation may yet be repeated between nations within the world.

Trial by jury was not only a victory for reason over superstition and force, but through it the principle was established that the people themselves should have a vital share in the administration of justice. Never, perhaps, since the days of Republican Greece had this principle received in an organized State anything like such emphatic assertion. Its value for liberty is obvious; still more, for the enlistment of liberty in the service of law. It corresponds to a sound instinct deeply rooted in those peoples of Europe who were awake to freedom. The scheme would have been a priceless boon to the Germanic tribes caught in a maze of conflicting jurisdictions, many of them simply imposed from above, and still hankering after the older, more democratic method of more primitive days, where, as a modern German has put it, a man was accustomed to ask his neighbour for justice as he would for a light.[1] Furthermore, the habit of sitting on a jury must have done much in England to instruct public opinion on weighty legal matters, and so to fortify that reasonable criticism of Roman Law on the part of expert jurists which made it possible for England to assimilate so much of the good and avoid so much of the harm in that rich but complex inheritance. Maitland points out how in the fourteenth century Wyclif the schoolman, commenting on the study of law in the Universities, can protest "that English was as just, as reasonable, as subtle as was Roman jurisprudence."[2]

The advance towards a free and reasonable organization of justice had its parallel in politics. Already Henry II could rely on the old national levy, the *fyrd*, and dispense with foreign mercenaries. The very misgovernment of John at the beginning of the thirteenth century led to the Great Charter with its stress on principles of freedom, never since quite

[1] J. Grimm in the Preface to Thomas's "Der Oberhof zu Frankfurt am Main." Quoted in Blondel's "La Politique de Frédéric II en Allemagne," p. 164.

[2] "Political Theories of the Middle Ages." Gierke, Preface by Maitland, p. xiii.

forgotten by Englishmen. Certain modern critics emphasize the privileges that the barons won by the document, but it is essential to reiterate that the barons coupled also with their claims demands for the privileges of towns and for the rights of the subject as such. The modern maxims, "No taxation without representation," "No arbitrary imprisonment without trial," are already in substance acknowledged:

12 (14). "No scutage or aid shall be imposed in our kingdom save by the Common Council of our kingdom, except to ransom our person, to make our eldest son a knight, and once for the first marriage of our eldest daughter; and for these purposes it shall only be a reasonable aid."

39 (46). "No free man shall be taken or imprisoned, or dispossessed, or outlawed, or banished, or in any way injured, nor will we go upon him, nor send upon him, except by the legal judgment of his peers or by the law of the land."

And towards the end of the century—1295 according to the old dating, 1275 according to the latest research—Edward I summons a Parliament comprehensive enough to serve as a model for every Parliament that followed, comprising as it did representatives not only of the barons, but also of the clergy, the small clergy as well as the great, the knights of the shires, and the citizens and burgesses throughout every county in England.

"Whatever affects all should be approved by all"—so run the statesmanlike words of the Royal Summons. The little sentence touches the heart of self-government, and we have not yet exhausted the implications that it holds. The rise of the representative system is of cardinal importance just because through its machinery it was to make self-government possible over a large area. A genuine element of representation, it should not be forgotten, had been present alike in Greece and Republican Rome. Officials were elected, and for limited terms; the people were not governed solely by irresponsible and hereditary magistrates. But the effective area of the electorate was too small. Now, after the long interval of the bureaucratic Empire, followed by the loose organization of peoples emerging from barbarism, the prin-

ciple is revived and extended. Many of the barbarians, indeed, with their habit of controlling their king by his council of wise men and his assembly of free warriors, had done much to prepare the ground.

And it is well to note that the effort is not made in England alone. In Spain both Castile and Aragon possessed a Cortes, representing clergy, nobles, and commons. In France Philip IV (Philip the Fair), in his struggle against Papal encroachment, and whether influenced by the Spanish example or by that of the local "Estates" in provinces such as Languedoc, or by the step of his English contemporary, or by all three, summons the first "States-General" (1302), and thus implicitly recognizes that it is at least wise in a crisis to consult the nation at large. In Italy the communes, choosing their own officers, are, as we have already noted, conspicuous for their energy and independence. In Germany the highest office, that of the Emperor, is itself in principle elective. But England outstripped her neighbours in three ways. First, she tried the experiment more persistently and on a scale at once large enough to mark it off from those of the city-states, differing herein alike from the ancient and the mediæval Italian, and yet not so large as to become, in those days of imperfect communication and no printing, simply ineffective for the mass of the population, as was notably the case with the German "election" of the Emperor. Next she drew her representatives from almost all classes, not excluding even the peasantry, in so far as the poor parsons could speak for them. Thirdly, these her representatives held on, more and more firmly, to the two decisive powers, to the power of the purse (granted by the Charter), and then, through the power of the purse and their own resolution, to the power of the sword.

Thus she has some reason for her proud boast that the assembly at Westminster is the "Mother of Parliaments," but she should not speak as though the idea had been peculiar to herself. Nor should she forget that for centuries she has failed to apply it consistently to the country of her neighbour, Ireland.

CHAPTER XIII

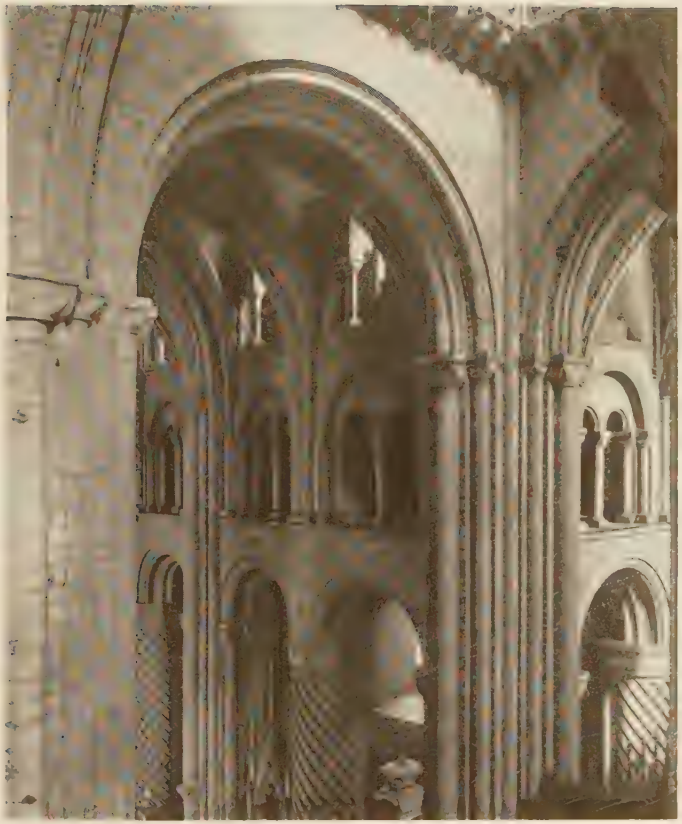
THE NEW ARCHITECTURE: ROMANESQUE AND GOTHIC

BUT if, during these early days, England laid the foundations of a political system steadier than any of her neighbours, it must be remembered that she was slow to develop it. There was not in England during the twelfth century or the thirteenth anything like the vigour of corporate life that we can discern in the Italian cities. Nor was England leader in any art. There the primacy belongs to France and Italy. The age was, at first, pre-eminently the age of architecture, and it was from the " Romanesque " of France and the Norman conquerors that Englishmen first learnt to build. They did indeed learn their lesson nobly, but they never surpassed their teachers, and they had much to learn. We look at the clumsy, heavy Saxon work just before the Conquest, and, however touching we may find its single-minded effort to express a vision beyond its grasp, we can only feel it the fumbling of a 'prentice hand when we think of the buoyant ease and mastery shown by, let us say, the early Norman work at Caen. The Church of St. Etienne, begun by William in that city, has indeed a jubilant lightness of effect not elsewhere found in union with the Norman majesty. The White Tower, still essentially " the Tower of London," built by the Conqueror to command the town, on the margin of the Thames and at the corner of the old Roman wall, looks to-day what it was meant to look centuries ago, a confident symbol of strength, beautiful through the high, free grace of its proportions.

The greatness of English architects lay in the swiftness with which they seized on the foreign culture and developed it in their own way. The interior of Durham Cathedral, arch after arch repeating the same splendid theme, at once simple and infinitely diverse, solemn and gentle in the golden-coloured light, is a thing among the marvels of architecture—and it was built within a century of the Norman Conquest. And as the twelfth century closed, another style, the Early English Gothic, derived again from the movement abroad, superseded the Norman. It was less majestic no doubt, but delicately fitted to express the visionary longing for a resting-place of peace and purity, still on earth, though freed from the dross of earth, and looking far beyond it, a longing that lit the central fire for the work of the Church and all her influence.

Already we can see in the Galilee Chapel of Durham an effort to make the round arch adapt itself to the new concept of form, but it was soon felt that the pointed style with its soaring arches, its flying buttresses, its slender spires, offered a more expressive medium for the lyric aspiration that filled the hearts of the devout. The Early English Chapel of the Nine Altars at Durham was commanded by the very man, Richard de la Poer, to whom we owe Salisbury Cathedral, an example, perfect as a sonnet, of one clear emotion, rendered visible in stone. As it stands among the stately trees, matching itself against them and overtopping them, it illustrates the truth of Hegel's assertion that the impulse to architecture springs not simply from the desire for shelter but from the desire to symbolize the Absolute. And that same desire, in a dumb and savage way, had been felt by the primeval builders who reared the huge monoliths on the downs ages before the lovely and conscious monuments of Christendom. Stonehenge and Salisbury—a mighty gap lies between them, but they are linked by a true resemblance.

Durham and Salisbury, it should be added, like most English cathedrals, suffer from a paucity of stained glass. This is partly due to Puritan destruction, but even allowing for that, we can hardly suppose that the English artists produced such a wealth of splendid glass as the French.



INTERIOR OF DURHAM CATHEDRAL

And the strange effect of the colours on a grand scale is one of the most moving elements in mediæval architecture. It can transport the imagination of the beholder, directly and mysteriously, into another world, and certainly the most overwhelming examples of its power are to be found in France (see below, at the end of the chapter).

In Italy, from the twelfth century onward, the new life overflowed abundantly into other spheres, but, as in England and France, it is in architecture that we see it first. And from the outset Italian architecture had a markedly distinct character. It was, certainly, " Romanesque " like the others, but it took its own way in developing the round-headed Roman arches and the long straight lines of the Roman basilica, and it developed them with a fine precision quite unlike anything Northern and at the same time tenderer than anything classical, marked indeed at its best by a sense of form derived perhaps from Greece and Rome, but warmed by a religious faith that Greeks and Romans never knew, and irradiated, at its best, by an unsurpassed fantasy. The clear severity of outline in the façade of San Miniato, or the noble six-sided Baptistery at Florence, so beloved of Dante, " il mio bel San Giovanni," do recall the stately, austere rhythms of Virgil and Lucretius, but, once inside the Baptistery walls, we are aware that the grand lines of dome and gallery are aglow with the luminous dimness of mosaic and marble, dark and light at once, as though a veined inverted tulip-flower hung over the heads of the worshippers.

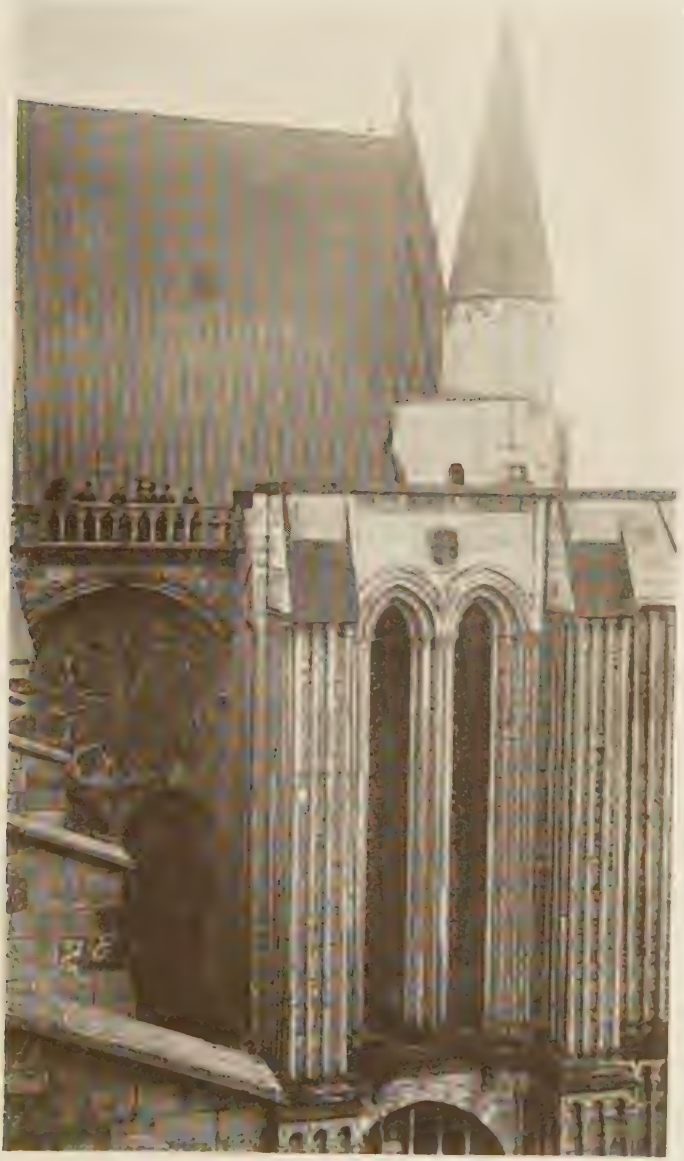
The splendours of St. Mark's at Venice were, we know, in part directly inspired by the Church of the Apostles at Constantinople, itself inspired by the Mother Church of Santa Sophia—but the fairy domes of St. Mark have an aerial lightness utterly different from the sternness of any Byzantine exterior. Both without and within, St. Mark's is finished like a jewel, and indeed much the same might be said of almost all Italian architecture at this time. Nothing is left rough, nothing uncouth, any feeling for the grotesque is mellowed into fancifulness, any extravagance subdued, until indeed the Northerner, with his love for romantic mystery and strange

contrasts of tragedy and farce, may be tempted to rebel.

Ruskin, in a passage once celebrated, tells how at first he resented the unflawed perfection of Giotto's Campanile and thought it "meanly smooth and finished" till he came to live beside it in summer and winter and watched it in sunlight and moonlight, when indeed it looks like a shaft of magical white fire held motionless against the darkness. Then he came to place it where it should be placed, among the great things of the world, still feeling, and glad to feel, the sharpness of the contrast between the suave loveliness shed from "that serene height of mountain alabaster, coloured like a morning cloud and chased like a sea-shell," and the grandeur of a grey English cathedral, cliff-like among the green lawns and waving trees.

It would, however, be a capital error, and go near confusing the unique value of visible form with that of spiritual edification, if we thought of mediæval architecture as always inspired by religious emotion. These builders had the instinct for harmony in every building, religious or secular, magnificent or humble. Under their hands a barn could hold its own with a church. This was so throughout the greater part of England, France, Germany, Italy. But in Italy, perhaps, the instinct was most widely spread, and certainly it is in Italy that the ravages of rebuilding have left least trace on the everyday dwellings. To-day there are still places, as in Siena or Venice, where the wanderer lingers to look simply at wall and angle and chimney-pot, his steps trammelled by sheer beauty, so compelling is the grace that lives in form and proportion and in them alone. Nor is the proportion only in details, but in the harmony of each city as a whole.

Many points in Italian religious architecture, as for example the details in Giotto's Campanile, take us back to the influence of France. For it was from France that the pointed style, the so-called Gothic, first came over the Alps, and France, furthermore, was before Italy in the mastery of sculpture. It was not till the second half of the thirteenth century (*flor.* 1260) that Italy produced in Niccolo Pisano a sculptor



SOUTH TRANSEPT OF CHARTRES CATHEDRAL

of the first rank, and it was long before others followed him, while he himself, there is reason to think, owed at least as much to French work as to the rediscovery of classic. Certainly as early as the twelfth century the French builders of Chartres show an amazing power in the treatment of their figures, both in themselves and in their relation to the architecture, concentrated and clustered as they are round the three great portals, leaving the precipitous lines of the building overhead untouched and free. Nowhere is the power of characterization inherent in mediæval sculpture better seen than at Chartres, making the building, together with its noble structure and the unearthly splendour of its glass, one of the most impressive in the world. The figures do not surpass, though they often recall, in purity and strength of line and love of natural form, the best of early Greek work. But they express emotion and individuality in a way seldom even attempted by the Pagan sculptors. The undesigned likeness and the difference are both startling. For example, the movement and the draperies of the angels raising the Virgin after death are astonishingly like those of the attendant nymphs in the "Birth of Aphrodite" on the so-called "Ludovisi Throne," but the face of the dead woman shows a new thing, the look of ineffable security that the Church promised to those who died trusting in the promises. We have only to compare the finest of the pathetic sepulchral slabs at Athens to feel the difference in the age of faith.

Yet—and here we see what makes Chartres a treasure-book of knowledge for the Middle Ages—the sculptors with all their devotion show us other sides essential to a solid view. Figures of clerics and monks, anything but ideal, are modelled with an observation at once so incisive and so restrained that we wonder how far the delicate irony is conscious. We are shown not only the high-minded intellectual, but the domineering fanatic, the priest who is also pre-eminently a debonair man of the world, and the foolish young deacon who has not stamina enough for workaday life. We learn to know them here as we might from the pages of Chaucer. Chaucerian, too, is the outlook on mundane things, the tolerant amusement

with which different types of worldly womanhood are given : the spoilt young beauty, or the queen of lofty charm and intellect, gracious, supercilious, and remote. Moreover, together with this zest for life are signs of the renewed thirst for knowledge, scientific, philosophic, all-encompassing : the thirst which had not been felt in its fullness since the days of Greece, and which already in this early Revival—long before what is usually called the Renaissance—could recognize something of its true kinship with Greece. Pythagoras, Aristotle, Euclid, their figures are thought with good reason to hold an honoured place at Chartres.

Still it is " other-worldliness " after all that is the dominant note. As in the Baptistery at Florence, so here, and indeed far more than so, we experience an actual shock of awe on entering the building. The light of common day has gone : something apocalyptic meets us in the long aerial lines lit by colours unimaginable, one would have said, on earth. Not only is each window a glory in itself, but, consciously or unconsciously, the whole scheme has been built up in a harmony to enhance, subtly and impressively, the religious appeal of the Church and her ritual. At the entrance of the nave the colours on either side, though always intense, strange, and rich, are, compared with what is to come, in a lower and quieter key. Then at the centre there blaze out from the transepts majestic, unearthly figures in flaming scarlet and gold beneath rose-windows bright with purple. Beyond in the ambulatory of the chancel the colours recall those in the nave, but are warmer and deeper, and, finally, in the tall windows that close the apse high shafts of silver and pale amethyst send down their clear light on the culminating station of the priest.

The effort of the artists in the service of the Church to symbolize something that included the whole of human life, and went far beyond it, has never been more nearly achieved than at Chartres. It is easy to credit the records that the whole countryside toiled at the building, for the whole building is an expression, at once ordered and spontaneous, of a vast and unifying faith.

HEAD OF THE VIRGIN LYING DEAD
(From a porch of Chartres Cathedral)

CHAPTER XIV

THE NEW LIFE IN ITALY: GIOTTO AND ST. FRANCIS

THE variety at Chartres may help us to realize how charged with varied emotions the Middle Ages could be, emotions often conflicting and struggling either for unity or mastery. Three men, beside the builders of such monuments as Chartres, Giotto, Dante, and Chaucer, may be taken as types of genius working, in different ways, for unity. Giotto (1267(?)–1337), one of the greatest artists who ever lived, appeals to us also as a great humanist. The shepherd boy of Fiesole entered into, and enriched enormously, the new inheritance of painting opened up to him by his master Cimabue (1240(?)–1303), who, in his turn, had taken over the accomplished Byzantine tradition and filled it with a fresh and tender life. The portrait of St. Francis, in the fresco at Assisi, due either to Cimabue or a pupil and based apparently on a fair record of the saint's bodily presence, is at once intimate and grand, noble in design, and instinct with the impress of a singularly attractive personality. Vasari's charming story of Cimabue's Madonna being carried in triumph through the streets of Florence bears witness to the enthusiasm for expressive form and colour now alive in Italy, an enthusiasm that was to bring forth the most perfect painting ever known in Europe.

Giotto, carrying on his master's work, laid the best foundations both for the decorative achievement and the dramatic. Nothing could be finer than his glowing, luminous colour, his sense of balance and broad rhythm, or the subtle and majestic

simplicity of his contours—especially in his latest and grandest period as shown in Santa Croce at Florence and the Arena Chapel at Padua. But from the very first he shows also an intensity, sincerity, and breadth of sympathy to win all hearts. Nothing can surpass his feeling for the sweet and poignant domesticities of marriage and motherhood. It is characteristic of him to delight in the touching legend of Joachim and Anna, long childless, and, in their old age, separated by the misguided Priest, to be reunited at last by the Angel of God, who sends them to meet each other at the Golden Gate, and comforts them with the promise of a child, Mary the Mother of the Lord. At the same time Giotto is unsurpassed as an interpreter of the Franciscan story, the legend of a Saint vowed to celibacy and self-denial. Not that Giotto shared the Franciscan faith: there are verses of his extant in which he smiles openly at any worship of poverty, and when he paints St. Francis giving his purse to the beggar, the cunning depicted in the sturdy rogue's face tells us plainly that the painter understood well enough the abuses of indiscriminate almsgiving. But he loved the boundless love of Francis for all things living and even for things we call inanimate, the love that made him conquer his natural loathing and nurse the lepers—"the Lord Himself did lead me among them, and I had compassion upon them"[1]—the love that made men fancy he could tame wolves and win the birds to join with him in worship, the love that sings all through his Canticle.

The modern mingling of reverence for St. Francis and criticism of his doctrine is curiously like what we can conjecture of Giotto's attitude, and in more points than one Francis himself bears a resemblance to a modern man of genius, Leo Tolstoy. Both men raised a burning protest against the unspoken belief that a man's life consists in the abundance of his possessions—to Francis a breviary was already more than enough for a true friar to possess—both of them went back to primitive Christianity in exalting brotherly love even to the neglect of all other "active" virtues—both

[1] In "The Mirror of Perfection." Also in the "Life" by Thomas of Celano.

THE KISS OF JUDAS
(From a fresco by Giotto, Padua)

though Francis far more than Tolstoy, looked to Death as the Guide into a vaster world and claimed for man that his real greatness lay in union with a God greater than himself. Both, by the sharpness of their negations, all but cut themselves off from the very civilization which supported them ; both were followed by a few whole-hearted disciples and by a far greater multitude giving them a reverence which nevertheless they could not square with their own workaday creed. Both, by their espousal of humility and submission, tended to hamper the growth of independence. We see this again, and still more strongly in the influence of St. Dominic, the Spanish contemporary of Francis (Franciscan Order founded 1209, Dominican 1213). That Dominic was the first founder of the Inquisition is admitted, and there can be little question that " The Hounds of God " (*Domini Canes*), in spite of their services to thought —for they were a learned Order—did infinite harm in heightening the fanaticism ready to flame up in Spain's devotion, always ardent of itself and inevitably excited by the struggle with the alien Moslems. The relentless crusade against the free-thinking, and indeed often wild-thinking heretics who centred at Albi, in the brilliant, restless civilization of Provence, was actively supported by Dominic, and it is the first organized persecution on a large scale of Christians by Christians, full of ill omen for the future, even if we admit real cause for alarm in the subversive theories of the persecuted. Tyranny joined with bigotry in the attack.

Years after Francis and Dominic, Machiavelli, with his accustomed insight, notes the support that the doctrine of submission could give to tyranny, at the same time paying the founders full honour for their faith in Christianity and the succour they gave to Christian institutions.

" For had not this religion of ours been brought back to its origins by St. Francis and St. Dominic, it would have been utterly destroyed. They, by their voluntary poverty and their imitation of Christ, rekindled in men's minds the dying flame of faith ; and their Rules saved the Church from the fate prepared for her by the evil lives of the great clergy. Living in poverty themselves, and gaining authority with the

people, they made them believe it was wrong to speak ill even of what is wrong ; and that it must be right to obey our rulers, who, if they sin, should be left to the judgment of God."

" A teaching," adds Machiavelli, " which encourages rulers to behave as wickedly as they like, for they have no fear of a punishment which they cannot behold and in which they do not believe. Nevertheless it is this renewal which has maintained, and still maintains, our religion." [1]

The divided loyalty which appears even in this late passage, recognizing one rule to live by and one to revere, was very characteristic of the ferment in the mediæval spirit from the twelfth century onwards, avid as it was beginning to be of secular knowledge and earthly splendour, conscious that the fullness of both would never satisfy man. But the spirit cannot rest in a divided loyalty either of thought or feeling. An artist like Giotto, through the sheer strength of his humanity, his hold on the inner links of beauty, could achieve a reconciliation of feeling, but a reconciliation of thought was needed also. And this, to some real extent, was achieved, though achieved, as we shall see, at a price.

[1] " Discourses on Livy," Bk. III. c. i. Tr. based on that of N. H. Thomson.

CHAPTER XV

THE PHILOSOPHICAL OUTLOOK OF THE MIDDLE AGES

DRAWING alike on Pagan thought and early Christian, the mediæval thinkers built up a unifying system which culminates for us in the writings of Dante, and that system, broken as it is, will always have light for the world. It goes back, along one line, to Aristotle. That "master of those who know," working on the basis laid down by Plato, developed, as we have already suggested, a view of things which, whatever its imperfection, could scarcely fail to inspire that eager world, and can be full of inspiration for us even now.

Putting the gist of it into modern words, we may summarize it roughly as follows: First, looking at the physical world, Aristotle held that if we could understand motion in its ultimate nature we should realize that it was an expression of vital energy, not indeed the highest expression, but still a genuine expression, and furthermore, that if we were to conceive motion in its entirety we must conceive it as in some sense curvilinear and returning on itself. This is because we can neither grasp as a whole a sheer unlimited movement in unlimited space—"an infinite regress," to use the technical phrase—nor yet can we admit any arbitrary limit set to space or movement from without. But circular movement might seem to have a principle of limitation in itself, being neither unlimited nor externally limited but as it were self-limited. Such a movement Aristotle and his followers believed to be the movement of the heavenly bodies, and it may be worth

noticing, first, how close this belief is, after all, to the Copernican theory, and, next, how significantly, from time to time in the history of thought, theories as to a possible curvature of space have been propounded as suggesting a solution for the problems of the mathematical infinite.

Further, Aristotle looked on the movement of the heavenly bodies (which started all other movement) as itself aroused by a conscious desire for the Absolute Good, the *summum bonum*, which is also God. Aristotle did, indeed, actually conceive the highest stars as living and thinking beings far greater than man, a conception that, as it stands, we certainly cannot accept to-day; probably it was not even accepted by most men of his own time, still less, so far as we know, by mediæval thinkers. Yet, in spite of the fallacies of a crude anthropomorphism, we must admit that we do not seem able to understand any ultimate activity in itself except after the analogy of desire for "what is good or seems good," nor feel complete satisfaction in any explanation that fails to show us not only that a thing is there, but that it is good for it to be there. To us, as to Greeks and mediævalists, the starry heavens still seem in a special way to proclaim the glory of God. Something deep in us responds to the line with which Dante closes his "Drama of God," the poet in Paradise finding his desire and will at one with—

> "The Love that moves the sun and all the stars."

This movement, in Aristotle's scheme, is communicated, mechanically, through contact between one sphere and another, from the highest circle of the furthest stars down to our own earth. And there it stimulates a pregnant movement in the four natural elements (the Hot, the Cold, the Wet, and the Dry), elements which possess already, each in itself, an inherent principle of activity, a principle among the many manifestations of what Aristotle calls Nature, *Physis* (φύσις). Such a principle constitutes the essence of every natural object, being something that causes the thing to possess a character *of its own*, not simply one imposed on it from without. And this principle, once more, is conceived on the

analogy of desire. Even throughout what we call the inanimate world, and in its lowest forms, this principle manifests itself by the tendency of each natural thing to persist in being what it is, the *conatus in suo esse perseverari* as Spinoza phrased it centuries later. A higher manifestation appears in the living world of plants and animals, where the natural force not only makes for persistence but enables the organism to *grow*, to use the surroundings for its own advantage, present and future. Higher still, in the world of human consciousness, the natural man not only grows, but, being definitely conscious and able to direct his will, can set before himself an ideal of *how* he desires to grow and, within limits, attain to it.

From lowest to highest each natural object, creature, soul, reflects so far as it can some aspect, some form, or idea, or thought of God. Man is the highest creature in the scale that we know on earth, though far from the highest possible.

Thus in a sense the love for God, the thirst for diverse forms of perfection, is the motive power of the whole universe,

> " that sustaining Love
> Which through the web of being blindly wove
> By man and beast and earth and air and sea
> Burns bright or dim, as each are mirrors of
> The fire for which all thirst."

Shelley may be found an admirable commentator on Plato, Aristotle, and the mediævalists, indeed on all Natural Mystics, ancient, mediæval, or modern.

In any case there can be no doubt that this vast and elaborate scheme, whatever may be thought of its truth, fired the mind of Europe afresh when Europe awoke from her stormy sleep. And not the mind of Europe alone or even first. The thinkers of Islam, still full of Mohammed's belief that the whole universe was the work of one God and therefore that nature and the joys of sense were somehow consecrate, had, as we saw, already seized on what they could of Aristotle's teaching, brought to them, strangely enough, through Syria and Persia by Christian heresiarchs banished from Orthodox Constantinople in the early centuries of our era. Finally at Cordova in the twelfth century a climax was

reached in the work of Averroes, the commentator on Aristotle, "Averrois che il gran commento feo," Averroes whom Dante saw in Limbo together with his precursor Avicenna and—fit companions for the two—the Hellenic and Hellenistic founders of medicine, Hippocrates and Galen, with other sages of the past, all honouring the master Aristotle, lit by the one circle of light in that dark land, an oasis of green rolling meadows within a seven-walled castle,

> "An open place, full of clear light, and lofty."
> ("Inferno," Canto IV.)

Averroes may have been, and was, severely criticized in detail by Christian scholastics, but none the less his genius, though hampered by ignorance of Greek, did stimulate with splendid results the influence of Aristotle on Christendom, and this towards the belief, at once rational and mystical, that man by training his reason, his will, and his powers of contemplation could attain an ineffable union with that Supreme Reason which is God. "The noblest worship that can be paid to God lies in the knowledge of His works leading us to the knowledge of Himself in all His reality."[1] For Averroes there was nothing inherently impossible in any creature attaining this union. But in point of fact he looks on it as only attained by a few chosen spirits among mankind. "It depends," writes Renan in his brilliant book, "on a kind of elective Grace."

"Grace"—the very word leads us to the typical Christian doctrine of the time. It has been said,[2] and truly, that in the early centuries the leading ideas of the Church were Sin and Redemption, while from the day of the Dominican monk, Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274), they come to be Nature and Grace, and the God of Grace is also the God of Nature. None the less, Grace is higher than Nature. "It does not destroy Nature," but it "perfects Nature," "Gratia naturam non tollit, sed perficit." The natural man alone cannot attain full blessedness: he must be endued afresh with power

[1] Quoted by Renan, "Averroès et l'Averroïsme."
[2] By Baron Fr. von Hügel.

from on high. "No created creature has sufficient strength to win Eternal Life, unless the Supernatural Gift of Grace be added to him" (Qu. 114A, 2).

The likeness to, and the difference from, Averroes appear even in these brief quotations. Averroes, like Aristotle himself, is far more rationalist; he has only a hint, as we saw, of anything approaching a theory of supernatural grace, while the reliance on grace is absolutely essential to Aquinas. Averroes further, again like Aristotle, cared little for individual immortality; while to the Christians of the Middle Ages that hope was all in all.

In point of fact, the thoughts stimulated through Averroes prompted Europe to widely different and often jarring views: to the orthodoxy of Aquinas and Dante, to the eclecticism of the Emperor Frederick II, to the bold experimentation of Roger Bacon, the Franciscan friar trained at Oxford and Paris, perhaps even, five hundred years later, to the "God-intoxicated" Pantheism of the Jew Spinoza.

It was all but inevitable that conflict should mark Christendom's reception of the new learning, coming, as it did, largely from infidel sources. Two powers had long been at work among the faithful, the reviving desire for reason and the old dread of rationalism. The study of Greek thought had never absolutely died out in the Christian Church: the Platonic echoes in St. Paul had been taken up and intensified by many of the early Fathers, Greek themselves. Even in the Dark Ages, the Irishman, John Erigena (sometimes called John the Scot), could deepen the Platonic tradition, though it is true that the appearance of such a thinker in the ninth century was, as Wicksteed observes, something of a portent. And when the sap of intellect and imagination was rising high once more, the Crusades, from their first inception in 1095, had helped, in spite of many drawbacks, to widen Europe's outlook both towards the Present and the Past. On the other hand, there were men like St. Bernard of Clairvaux (1091–1153), endowed with eloquence and intellect—his preaching for the Crusades was famous over Europe—and yet one to whom all secular learning still seemed a worldly snare fettering

his spiritual advance.[1] The struggle between him and Abelard towards the middle of the twelfth century marks already (though Abelard knew no more of Aristotle than some of the work on logic), an acute stage in the conflict between the reborn curiosity of reason putting all things to the test and the fervid, unquestioning piety whose watchword was, "Faith is not Opinion but Assurance."[2]

What would men like Bernard's followers think of paltering with the views and doubts of Moslem infidels? Thus both in the twelfth century and the thirteenth we are faced with sharp contrasts. As early as the opening of the twelfth we find Bernhard of Chartres, student of Plato and Aristotle, speaking with enthusiasm of the ancients: "We are dwarfs mounted on the shoulders of giants; we see more and further than they, but not because of our own sight or stature."[3]

Thierry, Bernhard's younger brother, Master at Chartres in 1121, accepts all he can of the scientific inheritance preserved or expanded by the Arabs, the medical tradition, for example, going back to Hippocrates, Ptolemy's work on astronomy, and the use of the zero number, either discovered by the Arabs themselves, or, as some hold, taken over from Indian thinkers, a discovery invaluable for mathematics. In Spain the Archbishop of Toledo, Raymond, follows up the example of Chartres by founding a whole school of workers, many of them Jews, to translate the Arab treatises into Latin and diffuse them over Europe.

On the other hand, we find the Church authorities insisting at the University of Paris that books on the teaching of Aristotle must be burnt. It is in the thirteenth century and at a time of acute danger to renascent thought that two devout Churchmen come to the rescue, the German Albertus Magnus, Albert the Great (d. 1280), and his greater pupil, the Italian Thomas of Aquino (d. 1274). Especially through the work of Aquinas a way is found by which Aristotle can definitely be reconciled with Christian dogma. Up to a

[1] "Life of S'. Bernard," by Cotter Morison, p. 11. [2] *Op. cit.* p. 317 ff.
[3] *Apud* John of Salisbury, "Metalogicus," III. 4. quoted by Ueberweg, "Geschichte der Philosophie," Vol. 2.

certain point Aristotle may be trusted; after that, and in matters where his insight failed, Revelation and Faith take up the tale. Henceforward devout Christians need not fear to study Aristotle, so long as they do not study him independently. A victory for thought is won, but the limitation indicates it will be a Pyrrhic victory, to be paid for at a heavy price.

Yet it is easy to understand the timidity of Churchmen. The Sicilian court of the Emperor Frederick II may furnish, amid much they could welcome, alarming examples of what they feared. Nowhere did the new teaching find a more ready welcome than with him: his masterful, many-sided intellect was eager to lay all lands under contribution. At Naples he founded a University, "so that those who hunger for knowledge might find within the kingdom the food for which they were yearning." [1]

It was at this University that Thomas Aquinas studied as a lad, and, after Frederick's death, came back to teach: it was there that the translation of Averroes' Commentary on Aristotle's Logic was completed by a Provençal Jew, who prayed that the Messiah might come in the reign of his patron, while Michael Scott, damned as a wizard by Dante, "magnified the renown" of Dante's own "Philosopher," according to Roger Bacon, by bringing to the knowledge of "the Latins" his work "on natural science and mathematics." [2]

There is something, no doubt, singularly fine in this largeness of intellectual sympathy. It recalls the unifying grasp of Frederick's own Norman forefathers. Travellers to-day can marvel at the twelfth century Cathedral of Monreale, above Palermo, built high among the lonely hills, like an enchanted Castle of the Grail, where the first impression suggests the force of Norman builders, while within the church stand ancient columns, the upper walls are brilliant with majestic Byzantine mosaics, and the fairylike cloisters and fountain of the adjacent court reveal the influence of Arab fantasy. Frederick himself, even if we credit all the tales of his gibes

[1] Grant, *op. cit.* p. 290.
[2] Renan, *op. cit.* p. 204. "Opus Majus," pp. 36–37.

at the clergy and the friars, seems to have dreamt in his devouter moods, like Roger Bacon himself, of "an enlarged and renovated Catholicism which should bind together and incorporate all that was best and noblest in Hebrew, Greek, and Arabic tradition." [1]

But assuredly, audacious and self-indulgent as he was, Frederick was not the man to enlarge the bounds of knowledge without scandal. A soldier who persisted in a Crusade when excommunicated by the Pope, an Emperor who crowned himself King of Jerusalem with his own hands, an amorist whose mistresses were chosen from East and West, such a one would hardly have been surprised to learn that Dante, in spite of all that Frederick's enterprise had achieved for his own master Aquinas, in spite of Frederick's own savage laws against heresy, put him down into the Inferno among the heretics.

The dread of such experiments in life as those made by the free-living, free-thinking court of Frederick, like the earlier dread of the Albigensians, reinforced the fear naturally inspired by any independent interpretation of Aristotle. Nor without reason. All thought is dangerous. It could not be a force for freedom if it were not. Roger Bacon, girding at the work of Albertus and Aquinas, was a real menace to the calm and order of the Church. Yet it is from such encounters that further truth arises, and Bacon's condemnation is an ominous landmark in the chequered history of culture. A "progressive schoolman," Bacon could admire Aristotle profoundly, agree to call him the Philosopher *par excellence*, and yet criticize him as freely as he criticized his commentators. "Aristotle made many mistakes," he will write, and not merely mistakes judged from a theological standpoint. In this free spirit he showed himself a truer follower of such a master thinker than any slavish disciple. Bacon's own service to thought, a worthy service, lay precisely in his conviction that men must search freely for themselves, *make experiments*, and ultimately, therefore, take nothing simply on trust. Catholic doctrine shrank from this virile teaching.

[1] J. Bridges on "Roger Bacon."

Bacon was condemned to silence, and the freedom of thinking hampered for centuries. A similar, and far deeper, reaction took place in the Mohammedan world. Renan points out that Averroes, who had so great a following among Christians and Jews, founded no vigorous school among the men of his own religion, was indeed the last of the great Mohammedan scholars, and left the field to an orthodoxy grown once again fanatical through fear. "The fate of Islam was the fate of Catholicism in Spain, and might have been the fate of all Europe." [1]

[1] Renan, *op. cit.* p. 30.

CHAPTER XVI

DANTE

WE can feel the danger of reaction quite markedly in Dante (d. 1321), the supreme representative in poetry of mediæval faith and thought. It is far from easy to sum up this man's work, even apart from the wealth of his genius. About the splendour of his poetry there can be no question : he is among the chosen sublime masters. Deeply learned in the most flawless poet of his country's classic past, he took the humble vernacular of his own day, and made of it a language august and simple, piercing and delicate, fit for his winged and steadfast imagination. Something of his content can come across in a translation, but nothing of the bright, mysterious music wherein the secret of his heart is hidden. Furthermore, the man himself is at once so human and so hide-bound, so compassionate and so ruthless, so eager for unity and the breadth of knowledge, and yet so narrow in the exclusiveness to which he found himself forced, that one can hardly speak of him without paradox. Most enthusiastically he welcomes the broadest elements in the teaching of Aquinas and his school. To a religious poet of his depth the blessing of the Church on the good work of the natural man as the necessary prelude to grace, and on all the lovely works of Nature as witnesses to God, must have brought sheer exultation. Like Wordsworth, he is happiest when he lives " in the eye of Nature." The morning sky can heal the wounds of Hell :

> " The sweet clear sapphire of the eastern blue,
> Brightening through all the calm depths of the sky
> Up to the highest heaven, comforted me."

In the system of Aquinas, where the grace given through the Church is conceived as crowning Nature and the Nature that turned from grace as something lost and damned, Dante found the principle of unity on which his genius fed. The whole of life grouped itself before him on this basis as a terrible and triumphant drama, and, master of symbolism as he was, he fuses physical horror with spiritual, and evanescent beauty with eternal. The cosmical setting of his theme is instinct with the poetry latent in science because to him time and space and movement were manifestations of the thirst for the Divine. The Hell he evokes is appalling because his vision is the realization of a Power turned directly and irretrievably against its true Good; his Purgatory thrills with hope because it is the place of man's spirit lifting itself into harmony with its true self; his Paradise is immeasurably beyond our modern dreams of progress because he has taken flight altogether beyond this world and found a rapture loftier than any other poet has ever attained. It is the rapture in the vision of absolute truth bringing absolute harmony among all who behold it. And this vision of truth is recognized for Nature's goal. His words in Paradise—surely the noblest defence of doubt ever written—could stand as a motto for the most daring of all philosophers, the thinker who counted man's recognition of inadequacy for a sign that he had hold on Adequate Truth, the German Hegel.

"I see well that our thought can never rest
Until it find the sunlight of that Truth
Apart from which there is no room for other.
It lies down in that Truth, when it has reached it,
Like a wild beast in its lair. And reach it can.
If not, the world's desire would be in vain.
Doubt springs from that, like a strong sucker growing
At the base of all our truth. And it is Nature
That drives us on from peak to topmost peak."
(Par. IV., 124 ff.)

The same trust in Nature breathes through the climax of the Purgatorio when Dante has struggled to the top of the Mountain, and Virgil tells him that he is now the master of himself, fit to meet Beatrice face to face, and that it has

become his bounden duty to follow his own desires. Strange likeness to Rabelais, across the gulf of difference! The summit of the Mount of Purification could be called an "Abbaye de Théléma," a "Monastery of Man's Will":

"Look up and see the sun that shines upon thee,
The small soft grass, the trees, the glad wild-flowers!
. . . . . .
Henceforth thy own desire be thy guide,
The steep ways and the narrow lie behind thee.
Thy Will is free now, sane, and purified:
Thou wouldst do wrong didst thou not follow it,
Obey its Rule. Behold, I make thee here
Over thyself Crowned King and Mitred Priest."

And the same sympathy with the natural thirst for knowledge fills the glowing passage that inspired Tennyson's "Ulysses" and was itself inspired by echoes of the Odyssey, where the old Wanderer tells the poet that he could not rest at home after his return, not even to comfort his aged father and Penelope and his son, but was driven out once more by

"the thirst to see and know the world
And all the sins and splendours of mankind.
. . . . . .
Thus I set sail
In one light ship, with that small company
Faithful to me for ever. . . .
My comrades and myself were old and worn,
Slow travellers, when at last we reached the strait
Where Hercules set bounds to say, 'No farther!'
. . . . . .
'Brothers,' I said, 'now we have reached the West
After ten thousand dangers, shall we fail
And grudge the little left of waking life
To the great venture past the sunset gates
Into the unknown world?
Think of your birth, not born to live like brutes,
But to serve thought and follow after valour.'"
(Inf. XXVI.)

Yet Ulysses is thrust down into one of the lowest circles in Hell, imprisoned for ever in a tossing spire of flame. Here, indeed, the modern reader, however appalled by the poet's ruthlessness, can understand his moral scale. Ulysses is

condemned for that spirit of lawless and treacherous intrigue which was the curse of ancient Greece and mediæval Italy, killing all hope of the unified and honourable government desired by Dante beyond all things earthly, even earthly knowledge.

But we are revolted when we find the poet treading down his own human pity for those unbaptized "heathen" who, however innocent, nay, however noble, must be damned eternally. That Dante allows one or two specified exceptions only increases the pitiless effect of the general conclusion. His own protest in the Heavenly Sphere of Justice is so heart-felt and so moving that we are tempted to ask why it did not shatter the merciless doctrine outright:

> "A man is born in India, and there's none
> To speak to him of Christ, no book to teach him,
> And all his acts and thoughts are good and true,
> So far as Human Reason guides him, pure
> In word and deed.
> But he dies unbaptized.
> Where is the Justice that can damn his soul?
> Was it his fault he could not learn the Faith?"

Yet Dante bows submissively to the Angel who tells him that so it must be, and the submission checked the sweep of the poet's thought and stifled his tenderness until we find the man whose compassion had made him fall fainting

> "as a dead body falls"

at the doom of Paolo and Francesca, the man whose verses drop tears of blood for the tearless agony of Ugolino, coming himself to aid in the torture and justifying his aid. It is impossible to forgive the spirit that made Dante break his word to the damned soul in the desolate circle of ice, after he had promised the unhappy wretch that he would touch his eyes with a human hand to melt the frozen tears and let him weep once more. It is impossible to reconcile that spirit with the exalted rapture that closes the Paradiso when Dante looks into the Light of God and sees within its depths

> "Deep down, bound up by Love into one whole,
> All that is scattered through the universe,
> All things, all deeds, all natures,—in such way
> That what I saw was one unbroken light."

The truth seems to be that Dante felt he could not give up the doctrine of Hell without giving up both the inspiration of the Bible and the inspiration of the Church, and both to him were vital. A breach there would have been fatal to the security of his whole system. Excessive claims of the Church, indeed, he rejected passionately: she was not to touch the sphere of civil government, the sphere of the Natural Man, guided by the dictates of Natural Reason, bound to use the sword in defence of civil justice, unable to suffer interference with this God-ordained work. But none the less, in Dante's view this civil government that was to embrace all Christendom under the over-arching rule of the Emperor was, after all, only the work of the Natural Reason and only made up one-half of what man needed. The other, the better half, lay in the search for the Beatific Vision, and of the gate to that diviner world the Church held the keys ("De Monarchia," Bk. III., chaps. 8, 9, 15). It is a coherent scheme and a stupendous one, but like many such it pays the price of coherence by cutting out all that does not agree with it.

CHAPTER XVII

CHAUCER AND HIS FOREIGN TEACHERS

WIDELY different was the spirit of Chaucer half a century later (*circa* 1340–1400). Far inferior as a poet, a fact he recognized himself, and not for a moment to be compared with Dante as a thinker, he is infinitely tolerant, where Dante is hardly tolerant at all, and there are times when we feel that his sunny kindness, a kindness never separated from shrewd insight, is more to us than all the austere glories of the Italian. His unity is looser than Dante's, but it is larger. Certainly it may be said that the nation which produced Chaucer gave the better promise of unity and peace on earth. The humorous good-nature, the sense that it takes all sorts to make a world, this that has been the safeguard of English politics, is of Chaucer's very essence. Every one who delights in the prologue to the "Canterbury Tales," with their rich fellowship of diverse characters, must feel with Matthew Arnold: "The right comment on it is Dryden's: 'It is sufficient to say according to the proverb that *here is God's plenty.*'" [1] And this liberal sense of unity springs from Chaucer's own creative joy in all his different types, bad or good, and some of them very bad. He does not obscure the values: good is still good and bad bad, but he makes us feel the human worth in them all, from the devoted single-minded parish priest and the "verray parfit gentil knight" to the scurrilous miller and the shameless pardnour, from "the mincing lady Prioress" to "the broad-speaking gap-toothed

[1] Preface to Ward's "Poets."

wife of Bath." Coarse old profligate though the wife is, we cannot help exulting in her cheery cry:

> "But, lord Crist, when that it remembereth me
> Upon my youthe and on my jolité
> It tikelith me aboutë myn hertë-root!
> Unto this day it doth my hertë good,
> That I have had my world as in my tymë!"[1]

There is some satisfaction in remembering that Dante never had a chance to put the impenitent old woman into Hell. Nor Chaucer's Cressida either. The long poem of "Troilus and Criseyde" is of extreme interest, not only for its own charm but because of the light it throws, along with its original, Boccaccio's poem of "Filostrato," on the chivalric code of love. The very errors of that code, damned without hope by Dante, have their worth for Chaucer and for Boccaccio as among the forces of human life. For Boccaccio, indeed, prodigal as he is of licentious grace and abrim with the zest of living, they have an ensnaring charm. The code was curiously inconsistent (as in fact most codes of love have always been); it had a fineness of its own in the loyal service of the lover to his mistress, but it was vitiated by the double-faced attitude towards marriage. It did not believe that passion could live in wedlock, and, lusty and poetic as it was, it had just discovered the poetry of passion. So it was ready to forgive everything to a *grande amoureuse*, as the French-speaking poet "Thomas" forgives Isolde her cruelty and treachery because of her consuming love for Tristan.

Yet it was a devout age with all its crimes, and could not refuse an inner homage to the sacrament of single marriage blessed by the Church as inviolable. Between these two loyalties the compromise is apt to be ludicrous. The lover need not dream of marrying his mistress; indeed, he had better not if he wishes to keep desire at full flood, but he must at all costs preserve the secret, for his lady will be shamed if the truth is known, and yet the secret itself is not shameful,

[1] The Prologue to the Wife of Bath's Tale, "Canterbury Tales," 469 ff. The vowels are to be pronounced much as in French.

but a grace and glory of delight. The direct result was to encourage weakness in woman and duplicity everywhere. In nine cases out of ten she must yield, and both the lovers lie, if they are to come up to the required standard. Chaucer, never deceived, however indulgent, observed the good and bad of it all with searching sympathy, and he has given us in Criseyde exactly the charming, unstable creature, delicious and frail, sure to be nurtured by such a code. It is scarcely possible for her to say " No " in earnest to any ardent lover, and just as, encouraged by her youthful uncle, the gay gallant Pandarus, she yields to Troilus in secret against her vow of chastity and her love of fair fame, so she yields to Diomede against her vow of fidelity and her love of Troilus. And yet in such a way that we cannot be stern with her ; not, that is, as Chaucer tells the story. He has softened and subtilized his heroine until in her mixture of tenderness and deceit, remorse and lightness, she recalls Homer's Helen, though without Helen's matchless dignity. Boccaccio's Griselda never feels compunction, and openly admits to herself that she prefers a lover to a husband.

The same free handling of a much-admired foreign model appears in Chaucer's rendering of Patient Griselda's story, known to him, not in its original (and most brilliant) form in Boccaccio's prose Decameron (which he does not appear to have read), but as told to him in Padua by Boccaccio's friend and sometime mentor Petrarch, the gentle lover, humanist, and publicist, " Fraunces Petrark, the laureat poetë," " the worthy clerk," " whose rhetorykë swetë enlumined al Itaille of poetryë."

All three writers have left their mark on the subject. To Boccaccio belongs the honour, as in the Cressida story, of first telling the tale with his unrivalled clarity and skill, and drawing the first strong lines of the characters. Petrarch has given it a high dignity, as Chaucer gladly acknowledged, by his sense of the power to endure that it implies in human nature ; but Chaucer himself does most to win our hearts by his frank outburst of indignation at the monstrous tyranny of the husband :

(l. 620) "O needlës was she tempted in assay!
But wedded men ne knowë no mesurë
Whan that they finde a pacient creaturë."

Likewise are we refreshed by his robust refusal to take Griselda's lamb-like submission as a model for the women of his own country. Chaucer offers indeed a classic instance of how a poet can be formed by the loving, yet discreet and independent, study of foreign models.

English literature, perhaps owing to the disturbance of the Norman Conquest and the intrusion of Norman-French, was then lagging far behind French and Italian, and Chaucer had the wit to lay France and Italy under contribution wherever he could. In the sheer craft of words and rhythm he owed most perhaps to his French models. Certainly he studied them first and his metres are taken from theirs, including even the lovely "heroic couplet," the rhyming line of five accents in which the "Canterbury Tales" are written and which has been used so often since by our poets, and with such varied effects. But it has never, we may add, been used, except perhaps by Marlowe, with the mingled softness, lightness, and strength given to it by Chaucer, and it is obvious that he must have profited greatly from the liquid delicacy and golden depth of his Italian masters, who themselves had learnt from and then outdone the French.

CHAPTER XVIII

FRANCE, THE TROUBADOURS, AND THE BEGINNINGS OF PROSE

INDEED, as Matthew Arnold was the first to emphasize, although France led the way in developing the romantic forms of verse and the lyric, following on her success in epic, yet she never reached the heights to which some of her scholars attained.

Where do the long-winded troubadours stand now compared with Dante, Chaucer, Boccaccio? We cannot read their interminable couplets without effort. The character-drawing is slight, and their moralizing, though often acute, has lost the freshness it once had. Their greatest charm lies perhaps in a certain flowery fancy, as in the opening of the *Roman de la Rose.* Yet the slighter lyrics show greater charm, as for example in this short-winged flight:

"Voulez-vous que je vous chant
Un chant d'amour avenant?
Vilains nel fft mie.
Ains le fit un chevalier
Sous l'ombrë d'un olivier;
Entr' les bras sa mie.

Chemisette avait de lin,
Et blanc pelisson d'ermin,
Et bliaut de soie.
Chaucës eut de jaglolai,
Et solers de fleur de mai,
Estroitement chaucadë.

Ceinturette avait de feuil
Qui verdit quand le temps mueil,

D'or ert boutonadë.
L'ausmonière était d'amour,
Li pendant furent de flour;
Par amour fut donadë.

Et chevauchoit unë mule:
D'argent ert la ferreurë,
La selle ert doradë.
Sur la croupë par derriers
Avait planté trois rosiers
Pour fairë li ombragë.

Si s'en vat aval la prëe:
Chevaliers l'ont encontrëe,
Biau l'ont saluadë:
'Bellë, dont estes vous née?
'De Francë sui la loée,
Du plus haut paragë.

Li rossignox est mon pêre
Qui chantë sur la ramée
El plus haut boscagë.
La sereine ele est ma mère,[1]
Qui chante en la mer salée
El plus haut rivagë.'

'Bellë, bon fussiez vous née:
Bin estës emparentée
Et de haut paragë.
Pleust a Deü nostrë père
Que vous me fussiez donnée
A fame esposadë!'"

"Will you hear a song of love,
Loyal love and true of heart?
Churl could never make it:
Made by true knight on a day,
Underneath an olive-tree,
Clasping his own lady.

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[1] Cf. the *Roman de la Rose*, and its English rendering, where *sereine* is translated by "mermayden." The word is also influenced by *serin*, meaning *fringilla serina*. Something like a bird-woman is doubtless intended. An echo of the delicious verse survives in the refrain still popular in France:

"Mon père était rossignol,
Ma mère était hirondelle."

Shift she wore of linen light,
Cloak of ermine snowy-white,
Surcoat soft and silken;
Buskins bright with cloth-o'-gold,
Shoes of pearly hawthorn-buds,
Fashioned straight and slender;

Girdle of the freshest leaves
Gathered when the woods were green;
Clasp of it was golden;
Hanging purse of lasses'-love
Hung by flowery chains above,
Gift of loving-kindness.

On an ambling mule she rode;
All his hoofs were silver-shod,
And his harness gilded.
Close behind her on the croup
She had planted roses three,
Made her saddle shady.

Down she rode along the mead:
Noble knights have met the maid,
Louted low and asked her:—
'Fairest lady, whence come ye?'
'France,' she said, 'has honoured me,
High in chivalryë.

My father is the nightingale,
Singing on the topmost bough
In the copse at evening,
And my mother is the bird
Whose enchantress-voice is heard
By the salt sea-marshes.'

'High your birth, O lovely maid!
Noble parents have you had,
High in chivalryë:
Would to God our Lord that He
Gave you of His grace to me,
My own wedded lady!'"

That little song by an unknown author of the thirteenth century breathes the fanciful grace of the Provençal Courts of Love, and suggests later delightful affinities with Italian

fantasies such as Botticelli's "Masque of Spring," and later still, with Marlowe's "Shepherd Song," where the maiden is offered

> "A belt of straw and ivy-buds
> With coral clasps and amber studs."

It makes us comprehend how France captivated the poets of other countries by her melodies, and how Brunetto Latini, Dante's master, could, to Dante's indignation, choose her language in preference to his own.

Yet, after all, jewels of pure poetry such as this were rare in France and somewhat lacking in weight. Already she was showing that her real strength was to lie in prose.

Already by the close of the twelfth century the romance most enchanting to us nowadays is the prose idyll—verses only appearing as interludes—known as "Aucassin and Nicolette," justly celebrated, moreover, for the direct and startling picture of peasant suffering that breaks through its amorous blossoms. Where verse is used at any length it is apt to be most telling when used as in the *fabliaux*, not to awaken magical echoes in the heart but to point a neat moral, or to heighten with its crisp chiming the witty brilliance won by shrewd observation of men and animals. The peculiar combination of fancy with dry, caustic humour that marks the typical fable is eminently characteristic of France, as befits the land that was to produce La Fontaine. Animal fables are instinctive in most peoples, but France first of modern nations gave them a polished form, and therein set up a piquant model for all Europe.

It is curious to note, also, how early is foreshadowed her acknowledged superiority in historical memoirs. Quite apart from their high value as history, it is a delight to read as literature the account given by Villehardouin (1130–1213) of the splendid and sordid Fourth Crusade, with its pictures of the sea "a-flower with ships" and blind old Dandolo leading his Venetians to the sack of Constantinople, or, a century later, Joinville's still finer story of his master, that true saint and noble king, Louis IX. Through Joinville's eyes we can see Louis under the oak-tree at Vincennes in the summer-

time, his councillors on the grass beside him, he himself hearing case after case, always ready to give a helping hand to any whose cause was pleaded amiss, or coming into his garden at Paris, with his cloak of black taffeta and his peacock-feathered cap, " to settle the troubles of his people," or giving audience in his palace to " all the prelates of France," who had determined to insist on his enforcing their decrees of excommunication by confiscating the goods of the recalcitrant. " To which the king answered that he would gladly do so, wherever it was proved to him that they were really in the wrong. But the bishop said that the clergy could not possibly consent to defend their decisions before him as though he were their judge. The king said in that case he could not act : it would be sinning against God and against reason if he forced men to submit when the clergy were doing them injustice. ' I will give you an instance : the Count of Brittany pleaded for seven years against the prelates in his province, although he was under excommunication all the time, and pleaded to such effect that in the end the Pope condemned the clergy. Now if I had forced the Count to submit in the first year, I should have sinned against God and against him.' "

" On that the bishops gave way," writes Joinville, " and I never heard that the demand was repeated " (c. 13, § 64).

The perfect courtesy, justice, and firmness of the king could not be better given. The passage is a model of light terseness, giving in easy colloquial form the gist of many a vital struggle between the rising forces of national unity under the king, and the desire of the clergy to unify all things under themselves. Deservedly famous, again, is Joinville's account of Louis' knightliness as a Crusader, but of equal interest the pendant where he shows with characteristic freedom of speech the harm the Crusaders did by risking disorder at home. St. Louis and the King of Navarre both urged him to take the cross a second time. " But I answered that while I had been in God's service oversea their own serjeants had plundered and ruined my people. And so I told them that, if I wished to please God, I would stay where I was to help and protect

the men and women who were given into my charge " (c. 144, § 735).

Throughout Joinville gives us the direct sense of reality that so many of the romances miss, and probably were content to miss. Professor Ker points out that, curiously enough, when French prose was at these first fine beginnings, far away in the North the Icelanders had already developed a prose literature, their virile sagas and histories, in a style that has never been surpassed for strength and power to thrill. Dramas they never wrote, but their work has dramatic elements in the nervous intensity with which the situations are realized and the characters left to disclose their secrets by what they do and say themselves, not by the comments of the narrator. The Icelanders lived far away from feudalism and the customs of chivalry, but the high sense of honour that is the most attractive part of chivalry never received more poignant expression than in their writing. And together with honour, humour and tenderness come shining through the fierceness of their tales, tales of warriors as they are. But let us follow the example of their sagamen and as far as possible allow them to speak for themselves.

Here are two passages from the central situation of the Njala, where the sons of Njal have the house burnt over their heads by their foes, and with them perishes their father, the old man without fear or failing, wise and gentle beyond his fellows. At the approach of the assailants he makes his one mistake in counsel, bidding his sons go indoors with him, never believing that the men against them will sink so far beneath the code of honour as to burn them house and all.

" ' Let us do,' said Helgi, ' as our father wills ; that will be best for us.'

" ' I am not so sure of that,' says Skarphedinn, ' for now he is " fey " ; but still I may as well humour my father by being burnt indoors along with him.' " [1]

It falls out as Skarphedinn foresaw. The passion of strife overcomes the noble-mindedness in the leader of the band. He gives the order for the burning. But he knows quite well

[1] " Saga of Burnt Njal," c. 127. Tr. based upon Dasent's.

that it is a monstrous deed, and he can still honour Njal. When the house is ablaze, " Flosi went to the door and called out to Njal and said he would speak with him and Bergthora. Now Njal does so and Flosi said, ' I will offer you, master Njal, leave to go out, for it is unworthy that you should burn indoors.' ' I will not go out,' said Njal, ' for I am an old man, and little fitted to avenge my sons, and I will not live in shame.'

" Then Flosi said to Bergthora, ' Do you come out, housewife, for I will for no sake burn you indoors.' ' I was given away to Njal young,' said Bergthora, ' and I have promised him this, that we would both share the same fate.'

" After that they both went back into the house. ' What counsel shall we now take ? ' said Bergthora. ' We will go to our bed,' said Njal, ' and lay us down : I have long been eager for rest.'

" Then she said to the boy Thord, Kari's son, ' You I will take out ; you shall not burn in here.' ' You promised me, grandmother,' says the boy, ' that we should never part so long as I wished to be with you ; and I would far rather die with you and Njal than live after you.'

" Then she carried the boy to their bed, and Njal spoke to his steward and said, ' Now you must see where we lie down, for I mean not to stir an inch from hence, whether the reek or the flames smart me, and so you will be able to guess where to look for our bones.'

" The steward said he would do so. There had been an ox slaughtered and the hide lay there. Njal told the steward to spread the hide over them, and he did so.

" So there they lay down, both of them in their bed, and they put the boy between them. Then they signed themselves and the boy with the cross, and gave over their souls into God's hand, and that was the last word that men heard them utter. . . .

" Skarphedinn saw how his father laid him down, and he said, ' Our father goes early to bed, and that is what was to be looked for, for he is an old man.' . . .

" Then the great beams out of the roof began to fall and

Skarphedinn said, ' Now must my father be dead, and I have neither heard groan nor cough from him.' "

The Icelanders, it is true, never fulfilled their magnificent promise and their work was little known in Europe at large till the nineteenth century, when indeed it has inspired many, and might be a model to many more. In the case of Iceland, again, a strong literature shows itself closely linked to liberty and law. Iceland that had been a home for freedom —men travelling West to escape being " the king's thralls " under Harold Fairhair, and building up deliberately an ordered commonwealth—Iceland lost her freedom through her faction-fights and after the thirteenth century we have no more memorable works. " By law," the far-seeing Njal had said, " by law shall our commonwealth be built up and by lawlessness wasted and spoiled." It was the waster that won.

But Iceland and France between them foreshadow how great a part the prose of realism was to play in Europe's imaginative life.

Meanwhile it is important not to undervalue the influence of the romances, whether in verse or, as later, in richly adorned prose. The twelfth-century romance of " Tristan and Isolde," for example, part of the Arthurian cycle to which we have already referred, appears to have taken its first compact form in the French tongue and under French inspiration, and in this form it captivated Europe. We find copies of it, faithful or free, in German, Czech, Italian, as well as in later English and French. And the charm has lasted to our own day. Wagner's opera, with all its modern complexity, is but one more variation on the old theme of that dominating, devouring passion, compounded of good and evil, warring against other loyalties, and only through the sacrifice of death working itself free at last.

The internationalism of the romances is a point not to be missed. The texture of " Tristan and Isolde " shows threads that are traceable some to Brittany and the Norman Coast, some to the Celts of Cornwall, Wales, and Ireland. And finally it is to the English Malory—English, perhaps of Welsh extraction—writing after an interval of three centuries, that

the modern reader will look for what is intrinsically most valuable in the whole cycle of the Round Table stories. Malory, guided by the most delicate taste, sense of honour, and sense of humour, worked freely on the ancient material, the problematic "French book" and the like, and in his "Morte d'Arthur" he has selected, polished, and enriched, until, to quote the stately words of his printer, Caxton, the reader finds before him "many joyous and pleasant histories, and noble and renowned acts of humanity, gentleness, and chivalry." [1]

At the sorrowful close, when the fair fellowship of the Table is dissolved in treachery and bloodshed, Malory rises to great heights. Few scenes in romance have more pathetic dignity than the farewell of the once guilty, but always lovable, Lancelot and Guenever, after the Queen has become a nun and "taken her to perfection." "Therefore, Sir Launcelot, I require thee and beseech thee heartily, for all the love that ever was betwixt us, that thou never see me more in the visage, and I command thee on God's behalf that thou forsake my company, and to thy kingdom turn again and keep well thy realm from war and wrake; for as well as I have loved thee, mine heart will not serve me to see thee, for through thee and me is the flower of kings and knights destroyed."

It is not surprising that Tennyson felt the impulse to recast this splendid stuff in modern poetry; but the attempt was only half successful, sentimentality too often taking the place of Malory's solidity.

We have overrun our dates in this outline of Romantic story and must return.

[1] Quoted by A. Lang in "Hist. of Eng. Lit.," *q.v.* for an admirable account of the work.

CHAPTER XIX

THE PROTEST OF THE PEASANTS

CONTEMPORARY with Chaucer was William Langland (or Langley) (*circa* 1362–1400), a writer far more insular and far less poetic but still a true poet and one always noteworthy for the light he throws on the time. In the remarkable allegory where the visionary seeks after Piers Plowman, that second Peter, the ideal man of labour and love, a reincarnation as it were of the Saviour's Spirit, coming to rebuild His Church and teach men how work and prayer should fitly go together, we can discern Long Will himself struggling with the real, heavy problems round him, wondering, sincerely and sympathetically, how to relieve poverty among the labourers without encouraging idleness, how to reform the abuses of the over-wealthy clergy and the lazy friars without destroying the unity of the Church, how to ensue peace and ensure justice. Like Bunyan, whom he much resembles, calling unceasingly on men to repent, Langland calls them to labour and bear with one another, clinging in the confidence of the seer to the power of the spirit, fighting as Christ had fought, His thirst still unslaked, " for mannës soulës sakë " :

> " Was neverë werre in this worldë
> Ne wikkednessë so kenë
> That ne love, an him liste,
> To laughyngë ne broughtë,
> And pees, thorw pacencë,
> Allë perillës stoppëd."
>
> (Passus xviii. *fin.*).

(" There was never war in this world nor wickedness so fierce that Love, if he chose, could not turn it to laughter, and Peace, through Patience, make an end of all perils.")

But there was to be enough and to spare of war and wickedness before there was any sign of peace or patience. Both France and England were thrown back in their development by class war and by national war. Of Piers Plowman's poet, writes Andrew Lang (op. cit. p. 108), " the moral advice was wasted on Lancastrian England, which rushed into the madness of the fifteenth century ; the burning of Lollards ; the attempt to conquer France—as vain as unjust—the burning of Joan of Arc ; the twenty years of defeat and disgrace which followed and avenged that crime ; the fury of the Wars of the Roses, the butcheries, the murders ; and, accompanying all this, the dull prolix stuff that did duty for poetry and literature."

The Peasants' Revolt (1381)—and the problem of the peasants is uppermost in Langland's mind—forms a well-known landmark in the history of England. It may have occurred while Langland was actually writing and possibly been inspired by something of his own ideal, though he is far, as it has been pointed out, from idealizing the labourers.[1] The movement has a definite place in the development of thought. Here, practically for the first time, we have the definite emergence of the demand, backed by force, that the humblest manual worker should be counted as a free man and have his right recognized to a living wage. The rising was not the least among the movements making for freedom in a century marked by Chaucer, Wycliffe, and the Lollards.

Parallel with it came the Jacquerie in France, fiercer, bloodier, and more ineffectual. And if through the serious

[1] Kenneth Sisam in an excellent little book, " Fourteenth Century Prose and Verse " (Oxford University Press), writes : " It must not be supposed that Layland idealized the labourers. Their indolence and improvidence are exposed as unsparingly as the vices of the rich. . . . Still, such an eager plea for humbleness, simplicity, and honest labour could not fail to encourage the political hopes of the poor, and we see in John Ball's letter that ' Piers Plowman ' had become a catchword among them."

It is possible, however, that " Piers Plowman," was a popular mythological figure before the poem was written. Into the complicated questions about the full authorship of the poem—whether more than one man had a hand in the work—we cannot enter here.

eyes of Langland we perceive something of the discontent fermenting in England, we should remember the picture of peasant suffering two centuries earlier that met us in "Aucassin et Nicolette."

The Rising in England, though beaten down, came at one time near success, and in any case it foreshadows the end in England of the worst features in feudalism, the slavery of the lowest land-worker to his lord. We must remember, nevertheless, that the change from serfdom to the "free" wage-earning status had been going on for a good century before the Rising in the informal English fashion, quite unsystematic, and quite as much with an eye to profit as to principle. Wage-labour was found to be more "paying" than forced labour. Landlords were glad to let their villeins buy themselves off if they could hire free labourers instead. It was the English translation into hard cash of the deep moral summed up in the Homeric adage, "A man loses half his manhood when he falls into slavery."

But the process was wofully tedious and incomplete, and the idea of a fairer distribution of wealth was only the hope of a few, a hope to which the conscience of the modern world answers far more readily, however much its practice lags behind. It would startle Froissart the brilliant and aristocratic chronicler, citizen of France and friend of England, lover of lords and ladies and all the pomp of chivalry, to know how a modern poet and reformer could sympathize with the Dream of John Ball and his plea for enlarging the bounds of liberty and unity:

"Ah, ye good people, the matter goeth not well to pass in England nor shall not do till everything be common and that there be no villains nor gentlemen, but that we may be all unied together, and that the lords be no greater masters than we be. What have we deserved, or why should we be thus kept in serfage? We be all come from one father and one mother, Adam and Eve, whereby can they say or shew that they be greater lords than we, saving that they cause us to win and labour for that they dispend? They are clothed in velvet and camlet furred with grise, and we be vestured with

poor cloth : they have their wines, spices and good bread, and we have the drawing out of the chaff and drink water : they dwell in fair houses, and we have the pain and travail, rain and wind in the fields ; and by that that cometh of our labours they keep and maintain their estates, and without we do readily their service, we be beaten." (Vol. I, c. 381, Lord Berner's tr.)

The passage has been the text for William Morris's most poetic and moving romance. And as readily as Morris will a modern historian sympathize with the demands, anything but extravagant, that the men put forward. The gist of them, writes Trevelyan,[1] "complete abolition of serfage," and "the commutation of all servile dues for a rent of fourpence an acre," would have done much for "the creation of a truly independent peasantry such as has never been known in rural England." These demands the King in his alarm actually conceded, together with a free pardon to all the rebels, but neither concession was ever seriously meant. When the chance came the promises were flung to the winds and the rebellion ruthlessly crushed.

And although the process of manumission was resumed until under the Tudors every man was free, the immediate result was increased hostility between the classes. The landlords found fresh ways to keep the upper hand. If the old labour made itself scarce and dear, there were new methods of exploiting the land without it. There was an ample market for wool on the Continent among the weavers

"of Yprës and of Ghent,"

and sheep needed less care than men. The great landowners began to evict their tenants, often without the semblance of law, or enclose for their own use the ancient common land, and generally, wherever they could to advantage, turn the plough-land into pasture. For this no doubt there was a certain amount of economic justification. In itself the wool trade between England and Flanders was profitable to both parties, and to the world at large. To ensure its safety was

[1] "The Age of Wycliffe."

the one justification for resuming the campaign against France that Edward III had begun and that developed into the disastrous Hundred Years' War (1337–1453). But just as that war went far beyond all reason and justice, so did the great nobles despoil the labourers beyond all right that could be pleaded on economic grounds.

There seemed no voices left to respond to the appeal of Wycliffe, who, like Langland, loved order but hated oppression. His plea for human charity and ecclesiastical poverty went unregarded. The fear of sedition reinforced, and was reinforced by religious intolerance, and Wycliffe himself, a father of free criticism and a leader in the translation of the Bible, found that he needed all his prudence to escape active persecution. Nor were the nobles content to tyrannize over the poor alone. They struggled to tyrannize over each other and over the monarchy. The solitary excuse for Henry V's monstrous renewal of the war with France lay in his desire to divert his nobles from their intestine feuds. It failed; the Wars of the Roses followed Agincourt.

CHAPTER XX

THE HUNDRED YEARS' WAR AND ITS RESULTS FOR FRANCE

THE effect on France was almost as grievous. France, already weakened by the ravages of the war under Edward III, by the Black Death, the Jacquerie, and the struggles of her leading nobles against the Crown, struggles as selfish as our own but much more formidable—France seemed to have no vigour left to counter the brilliant generalship of King Harry, or even the weaker but no less unscrupulous attacks of his following. Even his death did not help her (1422). Then appears in the general desolation she whose bare history outdoes all romance, the beloved of ages, valiant, compassionate, true-hearted, Jeanne d'Arc, the maid of Orleans, the saviour of France. The high beauty of her character, her devotion, her sweet humanity, her inspired leadership in the field, in debate, in the ways of common men, make themselves felt even now in the contemporary chronicle of her deeds and words.

Not only did she set her country free and awaken the spirit of national unity, but with her the struggle for freedom and unity never degenerated, as so often with lesser natures, into the desire to dominate others. She showed no hatred for the English when she bade them return to their own country. She loved her banner "better, forty times better," than her sword. "It was I myself who bore it when I attacked the enemy, to save killing anyone, for I have never killed anyone." Jeanne remains for all time an example of what cynics call impossible: generalship without ruthlessness, statesmanship without deceit.

"*Souvenons-nous toujours, Français,*" writes Michelet, "*que la patrie, chez nous, est née du cœur d'une femme, de sa tendresse et de ses larmes, du sang qu'elle a donnée pour nous.*"

But the woman was martyred and the man who carried on the work of unification was Louis XI (1461–1483), the tools of whose ability were force and fraud. In the work he strengthened the foundations of the royal despotism. For the sufferings of the war, the horrors of the Jacquerie, the incessant quarrels with the nobles, had made the people only too ready to acquiesce in order even at the price of liberty.

No attempt was made to reverse the momentous decision already taken in 1439, itself prompted by the fear of war and the outrages of the roving "Free Companies," disbanded mercenaries of all nations whose one object was plunder. This *ordonnance de la gendarmerie* allowed the king to levy a tax on land and property for the creation of a standing army, and an army in which all the captains were to be nominated by himself. Thus the French people surrendered both the power of the sword and the power of the purse for the sake of peace.

Nor were these sacrifices balanced by any increase in popular representation. And yet one might have hoped that the States-General, standing for the three orders, Priests, Nobles, and Commons, and inaugurated, as we have seen, so early as 1302 by Philip the Fair (Philip IV), would grow into a really representative Parliament. Indeed, after the blow of Poitiers (1356), Etienne Marcel, Provost of the Merchants, making himself master of Paris, had proposed a scheme that would have made them really such, for the control of taxation was to be theirs. But Marcel failed, perhaps because the excesses of the Jacquerie terrified sober citizens and made all popular movements suspect, and for years there was no further attempt. The body called the Parliament of Paris, indeed, continued its work; but, although it had the right of registering the royal edicts, it was rather a royal Court of Justice than any vehicle for popular political feeling.

CHAPTER XXI

ITALIAN CITIES AND ITALY'S LEADERSHIP IN ART

WHILE France was tending to centralization under a despot, Italy was left without any central government at all. After the crushing of Frederick II's dynasty at the end of the thirteenth century, "for sixty years no Emperor descended on the Italian plain." [1] Nor could any Pope be a symbol of national unity during the "Babylonish Captivity" of the Papacy through the greater part of the fourteenth century at Avignon under the influence of the French kings, followed by the inevitable setting-up of an anti-Pope.

The field was left clear in Italy for the struggles between city and city, and in the cities themselves for the conflict between the popular leaders, the oligarchs, and the despots.

Everywhere in the end the popular parties were beaten, and almost everywhere—Venice was a notable exception—the despots won. But the struggle for liberty was long and hard, and where it came nearest success, in Northern Italy generally and pre-eminently in Florence, Siena, and Venice, there too Art was at her best, though the despots also loved the arts and tried to foster them, and even in certain cases showed that despotism itself by securing order could prove better for culture than sheer blood-stained anarchy. It was the fever of faction that lost Italy her chance of ordered freedom—a fever never at rest, and seldom even allayed by the

[1] "A Short History of the Italian People," by J. P. Trevelyan (c. xi.)

healing gifts of common sense and compromise. When the popular parties were at their highest power, they would force the nobles to leave their castles and enter the cities to be under the eye of the people. But the nobles only made castles of their city palaces, and to this day there is a notable grimness in the fortress-walls of their towering dwelling-houses at Florence, Perugia, Bologna.

How real the desire for civic freedom could be the student may learn not only from, say, the surprisingly democratic ordinances of the Florentines in the days of Dante, when the city, to quote her latest historian, "bade fair to become a true republic of craftsmen," but also from the writings of Dante's contemporary, Marsiglio of Padua. To Marsiglio, nurtured on Aristotle, the very source of law springs from the people. Creighton quotes his definition of "the legislator" as one that could not be improved upon at the present day. "By 'the Legislator,'" writes Marsiglio, "I understand the people, the whole body of the citizens, or the majority of them, declaring by their own will and choice, uttered in a general assembly, that some special thing in the sphere of civil action must be done or avoided, under pain of punishment" ("Defensor Pacis," Part I, c. xii., tr. based on Creighton's).

If, with such words in mind, we recall the insolent, powerful faces of typical Italian despots, if we remember the unceasing quarrels between the temporal and spiritual powers, quarrels in which Marsiglio himself bore a prominent part, we can form some faint idea of the flaming background for the Italian Art of the *trecento* and *quattrocento*. Its vividness at least will cease to surprise us, even though we cannot hope to lay bare all the causes of its splendour and exuberance. The splendour and exuberance are, however, obviously connected; it is not merely the pre-eminent height of individual genius that amazes us in Northern Italy: it is the crowding multitude of true artists, many of them unknown. It was the Age of Art, as ours is the Age of Science, an outstanding example of what has often been seen, but never understood—perhaps by us never can be—the penetrating, transforming power of

co-operation in a common task. That power goes down to the roots of human nature, and when working freely in art or science, as in politics or in religion, it lifts the individual above himself. Though it uses imitation, it is not to be confused with mere copying, because personal and self-reliant activity is the very life of it. It grows through the interplay of personality, and cannot begin to work effectively without strong personalities to work on, and a strong lead in the search for a truth desired by many. Given these, and the infection of a sacred fire seems to run from mind to mind, lighting up abysses, opening vistas inaccessible to the solitary worker, and all the while making his own flame burn the brighter. The artist of original force, like the genuine man of science, develops his own genius just because he can learn from his compeers. So it was in the Athens of Pericles or in the schools of the Prophets at Jerusalem, or on the Elizabethan stage, but never did the power work with greater amplitude and opulence than in this Italy of the centuries between Dante and Michael Angelo. And the fact may bring us comfort when we mourn over the political feuds. The free spirit of beauty could make light of party barriers. Moreover, the bulk of the painting at the outset was religious and could appeal to the sense of a common faith.

One of the first great names in Florentine painting after Giotto is that of the monk, Fra Angelico (1387–1455), and some of his finest work lights up the corridors and cells in the Dominican Convent of San Marco, showing a largeness of design that does away with any over-sweet or over-childish sentiment, as for example in the lunette of St. Peter, Martyr, with his finger on his suffering lips, enduring all things to the death, or in the large "Annunciation" where the exquisite outlines of the vernal woods and the broad spaces of the open loggia enhance the impression of the clear intent look in the eyes of the girl absorbed in her effort to comprehend the words of the wide-winged messenger from the skies. Most impressive of all perhaps is the little "Annunciation" painted for an inner cell, where the Angel and the Woman are linked in a wordless intimacy of union, too deeply charged with its

solemn and precious burden for gesture or excitement. Of all themes the Annunciation was best suited to Angelico's virginal insight, and no treatment of it has ever surpassed his. But the Angelical Brother, though he painted most for the cloister, was not cloistered in the study of his craft. A keen modern critic[1] has pointed out not only "the gaiety and purity of his delight in nature," but also his interest in the new science of perspective and the new research for natural form.

It is interesting to compare him with two of his contemporaries in a foreign land, the Flemish brothers, Hubert and Jan van Eyck. The headship of Italy in painting was unchallenged, but Flanders, France, and even Germany (not England) could all boast artists of recognized merit, and at this period the Flemings are, after Italy, the most remarkable. Their painters initiate a series that continues (with many changes) down to Rubens, Van Dyck, and Watteau, but at this period, as elsewhere, their pictures are in the main devoted to religion.

At the opening of the fourteenth century the Flemings had already shown their vigour and independence in matters political (Battle of Courtrai, 1302), and during its course they exhibit the veins of finer stuff that run athwart the grosser elements in their national character. Jan Ruysbroeck (1293–1381) is to be classed among the great mystics of the world. The brothers Van Eyck, young painters at the close of the century, show a singular and admirable balance of the mystical and the mundane. The picture in our London National Gallery of a man reasoning with his wife in the warm and ordered comfort of their own bedchamber marks the beginning of that long series of homely scenes, so different from the rhythmical forms of Italian painting, and so appealing in their own way, that culminate in the pathetic splendours of the Dutch Rembrandt, interpreter, and glorifier of ordinary life. On the other hand, in "The Adoration of the Mystic Lamb," begun by the elder Hubert, "as good a painter as ever lived," to quote his brother's affectionate and extrava-

[1] Roger Fry.

gant eulogy, and completed by the greater Jan, we feel the spirit of the Church at her best. The mystery of the Christian sacrifice is made the centre for human effort, for the lavish loveliness of nature, and for all angels and archangels. The white altar, surrounded by adoring seraphs and virgins, is placed in a flowery meadow, girdled by pleasant orchards and rocky heights, and to this, as to a goal, come the saints and martyrs, and the wise kings, and the young knights riding abreast, and the common people trudging afoot, while through the gaps, where the green hills soften into blue, shine out the towers and steeples of a city, fair as the golden Jerusalem, firmly built as any Flemish town.

As in Flanders so in Italy, the emergence of mundane themes for art goes on steadily, and in Florence we meet with the ardent and powerful realism of the sculptor Donatello (1386–1466), a contemporary of Fra Angelico's. The primacy in sculpture was now clearly with Italy, where a school was developed that can alone challenge comparison for range and mastery with the ancient Greek. Yet in emotional character it is closer to the early French that had done so much to stimulate its rise.

Like the men of Chartres, Donatello is fascinated by the study of expression ; character is everything to him, so that he will not shrink from any harshness needed for the truth of his conception, trusting, and with good reason, that his gift of monumental design will lift the whole thing into sculptural beauty. Nothing could be fresher, more arresting, than his relief of John the Baptist as a boy, the wild-eyed resolute child, with the little rough head on which the hair, obviously, could never lie straight for two minutes together, or the charming ugly lads singing with all their energies, and with their mouths wide open, on the Musicians' Gallery, or, to take weightier examples, the figure of the sturdy Shepherd-King, the David whom Donatello conceived as peasant-born and endowed with the unconscious dignity, the greater for its triumph over physical defects, of a vigorous old bald-headed craftsman. Donatello had a special love for this figure and liked to swear by " the Bald-head." Nor was he

at a loss when grace was called for, or the look of breeding and trained self-control, as in the tall distinguished figure of the young St. George, alert and ready for action, but with perfect calm of bearing, his well-shaped hand resting lightly on the shield before him, or in the monumental simplicity of the soldier Gattemelata on his charger in the square at Padua, perhaps the grandest equestrian monument in existence. Donatello's joy in children and his understanding of them call up a thousand bright associations with other Florentines: Luca della Robbia's swaddled babies set in medallions above the Ospedale degli Innocenti, or Lippo Lippi's "bowery flowery angel-brood." Lippo, the pet of the Medici, is typical enough of the countless delightful artists, only just below the first rank, whom we must pass over here. But room must be found for Botticelli (1446–1510), if only because of his fervid emotion, his strange and poignant beauty, so strange that it repelled lovers of art for centuries, until indeed Ruskin led the reaction and re-awakened the world to the charm of those slender dreamy figures, swaying in a soft clearness of light touched with the pathos that waits on loveliness.

Botticelli's figures divide themselves into two distinct classes, visions of dove-eyed Madonnas, attended by wistful St. Johns and ethereal angel-figures, sharp and delicate as blossoming almond-boughs, or else enchanting fantasies of pagan Floras, Venuses, and Zephyrs; and the division shows that, as we might expect of a nature so sensitive, he was almost equally attracted by the humanist ideals of the growing Renaissance, the revival of the Greek reverence for reason, physical beauty, and love, and by religious fervours such as blazed out in a Savonarola, a man who would have swept aside the beauty of the flesh altogether as something that merely ministered to the lust of the eyes. One picture of his combines both ideals in a harmony that is much his own—Pallas Athena, a characteristic figure with the long sinuous line of which he had the secret, her grey eyes full of brooding wisdom, subduing with sovran gentleness the Centaur-Man. The goddess is clothed in translucent pearly raiment embroidered with branch-work of green olive-sprays and a

A MIRACLE OF THE HOLY CROSS
(From the Painting by Gentile Bellini, Venice)

repeated device of three sapphire rings interlaced, the cognizance of the Pitti for whom the picture was painted. It is the dream of a painter who is a poet and something of a publicist also, and it throws a side-light on that patronage of culture by which the great families in Italy helped to maintain their position. The aspiration to unite Pagan and Christian ideals marks, indeed, much that is most attractive in the fifteenth century. It is characteristic, for example, of Vittorino da Feltre, the broad-minded teacher, whose worn lovable features have been preserved for us by that superb medallist Pisanello.

In marked contrast to the perfervid emotionalism of Botticelli we have the calm strength of Piero della Francesca (1416–1492), to modern minds one of the most sympathetic in the whole company of these artists. Born in a quiet little Umbrian town, he was trained at Florence and himself taught the teacher of Michael Angelo, Luca Signorelli. With Piero, the ideals of Paganism and Naturalism seem spontaneously to support and enrich the Catholic dream of another world as the crown of this. Piero was much like himself when he put his noble peasant Madonna, bearing the burden of the unborn life within her, as guardian of the white-walled Campo Santo at Monterchi, where the dead lie near the cypress avenue among the remote Umbrian hills. His stately figures combine a statuesque majesty equalling the ancient classic pride with a new and grave serenity of their own. And he can use with equal decorative effect the dilapidated walls of a farmer's outhouse and the fluted columns and rich ceiling of a neo-Pagan palace-hall. Perhaps the greatest of all his works is the fresco of the Resurrection still preserved in his native Borgo, where Christ, carrying the banner of victory, strong-limbed, golden-haired, the look of death still lingering in his dark wide-open eyes, a mantle flung round him rosy as the flush of dawn, rises straight before us out of the grey sarcophagus, one foot planted on the rim, lifting himself back to life by a stupendous effort, irresistible, triumphant, but triumphant through tragedy. The Roman soldiers, in their rich dark-coloured accoutrements, lie sleeping in front of the

sculptured tomb. The miracle of life is being accomplished alone, in the solitary presence of the dawn, the sun not yet up, the spring-time scarcely begun, one tree leafless against the quiet faintly-tinted sky.

ATHENA TAMING A CENTAUR
(From the Painting by Botticelli, Florence)

PART III.—RENAISSANCE

CHAPTER XXII

ITALIAN ART AND THE TRANSITION: ITALY'S LOSS OF FREEDOM

PIERO DELLA FRANCESCA comes just before the climax of the Renaissance in Italy. It is impossible to assign any one date at which this period begins—ever since the twelfth century there had been a revival of thought—but certainly by the opening of the sixteenth the forces of free speculation, criticism, and neo-Paganism were gathering head. The process was quickened by the fall of Constantinople, captured at last by the Ottoman Turks in 1453, and the consequent impetus given by dispossessed Byzantine scholars to the study of classical learning, already, and more and more widely, being pursued in Europe. Men were now reading the Greek authors for themselves and rediscovering much that could not be incorporated in the traditional theology. It was no longer a mere question of Aristotle in the light of Aquinas. The situation was full both of menace and hope. The old unity of the Church was threatened at its base. What was the new order to be?

In Italy the situation was at its most dazzling and its most ominous point. Political stability hardly existed; there was no central government, the despots, hating each other, were all of them insecure, and the republicans were struggling against imminent defeat. Ecclesiastical authority was undermined not only by the growing scepticism but by the corruption of the clergy and a licentiousness always strong in the Italian

temperament. The period ended in disaster and slavery for the land, followed by inevitable stagnation, but it was for the time full of ferment in thought and feeling and crowded with splendid names.

Among the artists let us take as typical Leonardo da Vinci (1452–1519) and Michael Angelo (1475–1564). Both were Florentines, both keenly sensitive, though in different ways, to the splendour and corruption of their time, and to the daring spirit that heralded alike the Reformation and the beginnings of modern science. Both watched, one apparently with impassive contempt, the other in shame and agony, how the quarrels of Popes and tyrants led to the extinction of Italy's freedom, how the French made their disastrous incursion, pleading their claim on Naples, with the consent, perhaps at the instigation of Ludovico Sforza (*il Moro*), despot of Milan, enemy of Florence, and "the cause of Italy's ruin," as Machiavelli called him; and how the French were followed by the more lasting curse of the Germans and the Spaniards, flooding the country to counter the French influence. Each of them was a many-sided genius, painter, sculptor, engineer, thinker, but Leonardo leant rather to scientific speculation, actually forecasting modern discoveries, Michael Angelo to poetry, patriotism, and religion. No imagination was ever subtler, more curious, free, and acute than da Vinci's, but in almost all his work there is an underlying coldness; it is as though his vision of the passions and weaknesses in human nature had frozen his affections. No painting of the Siren woman has equalled his Monna Lisa; he has understood the spell that goes far beyond a merely sensual lure, promising rather that knowledge of good and evil that will make men as gods. Yet it is all given with an extraordinary aloofness as though he were anatomizing a strange creature of the infinite sea, not as though, like Shakespeare with Cleopatra, he had lived himself into the woman's heart. It is not surprising that his caricatures are among the most terrifying in the world, nor yet that some works which he meant to be sublime, such as the world-renowned "Last Supper," should be marred, for all their amazing skill and dignity, by a touch of self-conscious-

ness. He studied human nature too much in detachment to surprise its last and finest secrets. Only, perhaps, in the faces of the aged does real tenderness and veneration enrich his searching psychology—as in the unfinished "Adoration of the Magi," where the haggard faces of old men who have spent their lives in the vain search for knowledge peer wistfully through the dim soft shadows into a sudden light of hope, or as in the incisive drawing where the deep eyes in the old father's worn and furrowed face scrutinize the arrogant features of the magnificent youth who does not care to understand him.

Michael Angelo, on the contrary, is even hampered by his power for suffering. True, it is bound up with his greatest achievements (for his temperament was tragic), from his first Pietà carved when he was only twenty-two, the dead Christ stark on the knees of a woman who looks at once a youthful maiden and the bereaved mother of men, to the last study of the same theme at which he toiled in his old age and, so it is said, intended for his own tomb.[1] Yet he was also singularly sensitive to beauty of the free and vigorous Pagan type, and this sensitiveness increases both the solidity and the pathos of his work. The sculptured Madonna now in the Medici Chapel at Florence is no bloodless, nun-like saint, but a woman formed for the fullness of life and happiness, and the symbolic "Dawn" and "Night" of the Medici tombs beside her, worn as they are with shame and suffering, are still her sisters.

The whole scheme for the tombs, indeed, shows in another way that largeness of view in Michael Angelo which could counterbalance, though not overcome, his tendency to exaggeration. The Medici, once citizens, then masters of Florence, had crushed her liberties at last with the help of Pope and Emperor,[2] forcing themselves back on the city that had flung them out, and he, who had fought them himself, puts below their effigies figures that typify the elemental Powers of Nature, Twilight and Dawn, and Night and Day, resentful

[1] The first is in St. Peter's at Rome, the other in the Duomo at Florence.

[2] Clement VII (Giulio de Medici) and Charles V.

witnesses of the wrong. The triumph of tyranny is felt to be an outrage on Nature herself, and the defeated judge their masters out of the universal disgrace. None the less in the statue of Lorenzo full justice is done to what was fine in the Medici, their distinction, their intellect, their force and the beauty they loved.

So again we can gather even from the unfinished fragments for the monument to Pope Julius how complete and how stern in its completeness the presentment of what Julius desired would have been. The base of the monument for the majestic figure of the martial Pope was to be supported by captive slaves and old men, overthrown but indomitable, prostrate beneath insolent conquering youths. Swinburne has woven into his verse, written when Italy was at last regaining her freedom, a reference to lines of Michael Angelo's own that prove what his feeling was:

> "Pale, with the whole world's judgment in his eyes,
> He stood and watched the grief and shame endure
> That he, though highest of Angels, might not cure,
> And the same sins done under the same skies,
> And the same slaves to the same tyrants thrown,
> And fain he would have slept and fain been stone."

This sad proud spirit, as of eagle-winged hopes fettered by the weight of a world gone wrong, fills the painting of the Sistine roof with the heroic gloom that darkens its glory. The grace and vigour of human life in youth, maturity, and old age, open out above us, splendid in athletes, scholars, prophets, women of intellect, and nursing mothers, but faces and figures are tense with the burden of the doom they apprehend or strained by the intolerable waiting for deliverance. Significantly the painter has made a tragic use of a joyous neo-classic theme, naked boys playing with shields and garlands. The boys have grown to be young men facing battle, steadfast or overwrought, the garlands have thickened into heavy coils, and the shields they strain themselves to lift suggest a long and doubtful struggle. The instinct of centuries has chosen the "Creation of Adam" as the finest of the separate pictures among the crowding visions—a man with

MOTHER AND CHILD
(From the Drawing by Michael Angelo, Florence)

a woman's wistfulness in his face, a strong man nerveless for all his strength, lying, weak from the birth still uncompleted, on the primeval hills above the void, sustaining himself by his desire for the life-giving touch from the finger of God.

Anyone can find flaws in Michael Angelo's work. Perhaps there never was an artist so great who was at the same time so faulty. In sculpture, painting, architecture, everywhere there are obvious blunders and faults of taste. His fury of emotion could not master his medium, and if he left so many works incomplete it is partly because the conception itself was never completely sculptural, nor pictorial, nor architectonic. And he was a bad master to follow. The over-emphasis that we forgive in him became empty rhetoric in his imitators. He comes too at an age when the once rushing stream of Italian art had begun to fail. Freedom was failing and with it inspiration. The sculpture and painting of the two centuries before his own had been marked by a signal union of deep and sincere emotion with an intimate sense for the direct appeal of form and colour, over and above any content that could be put into words. Some such union, no doubt, is the distinctive mark of all the arts that appeal to the eye; they exist to express something that can only be so expressed, and hence all mere words about visual art, valuable as they may be for clues, are apt to seem a little impertinent. Moreover, the unique significance of form and colour, thus apprehended by the true artist in a way that eludes explanation, leads him to discoveries that go beyond the appearances of Nature, however closely they may be connected with them. His task is always to make something new. Yet every true artist has felt the stimulus of Nature, and the least inadequate theories of æsthetics are those that admit an unknown unity from which both Art and Nature are derived.

Italy's painting and sculpture up to the height of the Renaissance had held in a marvellous fusion and for their mutual enhancement the three elements, decorative, descriptive, and dramatic, all of which we have to recognize if we are not to mutilate the ample inheritance her artists have bequeathed to us. Their achievement was made the easier, perhaps, by

certain simple and inspiring conditions under which they worked. They shared with their public a grand mythology, the Christian, as yet unshattered by criticism and of which the central idea was exactly that an ineffable Thought had been made manifest in flesh. Their early lack of technical skill in the minor branch of mere representation was of actual service to them. And that in two ways: there was the less danger of complete distraction from their peculiar task of pure design, and on the other hand the excitement of discovering for themselves the laws of perspective, the possibilities of light and shade, the facts of anatomy, vivified their perceptions and prevented them from becoming the slaves of outworn tradition. Thus, and for a long while, they kept the good of a living and growing science without the dead weight of pedantry and irrelevance. And in the fifteenth century the bounds of their art had been widened to include the secular as well as the sacred. But in the sixteenth century comes the fall.

That fall is not fully explicable with our present knowledge. The ultimate causes for the dying away, as for the rising up, of genius still lie beyond our ken. But some points we can explain. It is easy to understand why religious painting becomes ineffective. The most vivid minds in Italy were ceasing to believe the old mythology in the old and simple sense. The steady growth of learning and criticism had produced its inevitable result. The widening knowledge of Greek, for example, brought to light not only the weaknesses of the Fathers, their discrepancies, credulities, and ignorances, but the strength of the Pagan ideal, the humanity and richness of those spirits that Dante had put into everlasting hell. Nor were the professed leaders of the Roman Church the men to avert the change. Criticism had only too much to feed on in the self-seeking of the Medici Pope, Leo X (1513), the military aggressiveness of Julius II (1503), the excesses of the Borgia Alexander VI (1493). Pinturicchio, painting the wicked old Borgia in his charming and quite irreligious frescoes, must have smiled more than once in his sleeve. Change of doctrine, certainly, is not enough to account for the dwindling of

religious art. Rembrandt the Protestant would alone prove this. Even the bitter scepticism of the amazing Fleming, Pieter Brueghel the Elder (*circa* 1525–1569), does not lessen the dramatic force with which he handles religious themes: it only changes the direction. His "Adoration of the Magi" [1] suggests no sudden unveiling of unhoped-for truth, but it is overwhelming in the sternness with which it presents a mockery and a cheat. In Italy, however, religious doubt had not, speaking broadly, the stress to ennoble the souls it shook, and in Italy religious painting was clearly on the way to the soulless insipidities of a Carlo Dolci. Yet there might still have been, one fancies, under happier conditions, a great school of secular painting. And so at first there was. The grace and sweetness of Raphael's Madonnas are, we realize now, little but echoes of something far deeper and more moving, but in portraits Raphael's hand is freer and his genius masters triumphantly the grim strong face of Julius, or the unscrupulous self-indulgent jowl of Leo X, connoisseur, schemer, and sensualist, to whom the Papacy was a gift to be "enjoyed," with his serpent-like nephews behind him.

But Raphael (1483–1520) is almost the last painter of commanding genius to be found in Central Italy or Florence, and it seems impossible to dissociate the decline with the extinction of freedom. For, with the marked exception of Venice, the greater part of Italy, after the complicated struggles in the sixteenth century, lay prostrate in the centre under the Pope and in the North and South under Austria or Spain. But Venice, though sorely crippled by her rivals, still kept her independence and in Venice painting still kept much of the old vigour. We can watch the change from the work of Giovanni Bellini, a man full both of the old religious fervour and the new joy in life, on through the superb romantic charm of Giorgione to the more mundane brilliance and gorgeous "poesies" of Titian, Tintoretto, and Veronese, without feeling the destruction of power (Titian, 1477?–1576; Tintoretto, 1519–1594; Veronese, 1528–1588).

But Venice after all was a small and narrow oligarchy and

[1] Now in our London National Gallery.

in Venice also the great succession dwindles down in the seventeenth century. We are left as a rule, while recognizing brilliant endowment and accomplishment, to be wearied by a vague burden of hollowness. This inner emptiness on the one hand and the undeniable skill on the other go far to explain why the Italian art of the seventeenth century which delighted all the "connoisseurs" and "dilettanti" of the eighteenth has been found burdensome in the nineteenth and twentieth. The reaction may have gone too far, but it is based on a sound instinct. By the close of the sixteenth century in Italy the living fountains were being choked.

Nevertheless the traditions of the last Italian painters belonging to the great age remained vital enough to inspire both France and Spain. Poussin in France (1594–1665) and Velazquez in Spain (1599-1660) show the marked impress of Italy, and in France the impulse never quite died out. Titian's virile genius, in particular, was exactly of the kind to delight the age, uniting as it did a command over realism with a high poetic majesty. His two portraits of Charles V, the dominant political figure of his day, serve well to illustrate this double power. Both have grasped the character of the ruler, but the one now at Munich gives us merely the human statesman, with the dignity of a king, it is true, but also, and obviously, with the faults of a man grown old in greed and cunning and more than half wearied of a thankless task. While in the Madrid picture Charles is the transfigured monarch of romance, riding, implacable and resolute, like an emissary of superhuman vengeance, across a lonely enchanted forest land.

Portraiture and landscape, it may be added, with their close clinging to the actual tend now to become the themes most stimulating to European artists at large. The artist is to live more by sight, and less by faith. In Flanders Rubens and Van Dyck, in Spain Velazquez, and in Holland Rembrandt will all show this in different ways.

In Italy the decline of painting and sculpture was paralleled by the equally rapid decline in literature. Machiavelli (1469–1527) is one of the last original forces, and in him we

see at war the Imperial tradition in its most despotic form and the Republican in its freest. One part of his nature, doubtless the deepest, turned to the ideal of a free self-governing community, as can be plainly felt in his "Discourses on Livy," but experience, especially the experience of the Italians he saw round him, had disillusionized him as to its possibility. Such men were not fit, he seems to have thought, for anything but authority, and he calls for a Prince bold enough to stick at no scruple if he can drive out the foreigner, bend the weak and quarrelsome citizens to his will, and so save and unify the country in its own despite. The history of Machiavelli's thought is tragic, for it is that of a mind led largely through its own boldness and clear-sightedness to a vicious view of a statesman's duty. And its influence upon history has been tragic.

Machiavelli's contemporary, the courtly Ariosto (1470–1533), shows unmistakable signs of decadence. But still there is spirit and grace enough in his elaborate scholarly fantasias on Europe's poetic traditions, classic and romantic alike, for us to understand how Spenser in the English re-awakening could take him for a model. After Machiavelli and Ariosto, however, to whom we may add the slighter Tasso a little later (1544–1595), Italian literature sinks into sheer weakness. Religious despotism, fostered by the Spanish reaction from the Reformation, was to reinforce political despotism. The time was not far off when Milton, early in the seventeenth century, could note as he travelled in Italy that "Nothing has been writ these many years but flattery and fustian." Somewhat the same is true concerning the more slowly-developing art of music. How great was the native Italian gift for this, the most mysterious of the arts, may be recalled from the mere mention of Palestrina, unquestioned king, during the sixteenth century, among those masters of the limited harmonic sequences, the carefully-chosen concurrent notes, which had been discovered for the enrichment of single melodies. There are signs that Italians could have gone farther, and expanded harmonic rules much as Germans were to do later. But the primacy in music passes from an Italy of the Popes

to a land that kept alive, after however devastating a conflict, the freer, more searching spirit of the Reformation.

Yet, and here once more the history of Italy recalls that of ancient Greece, though freedom had gone and with it a free art, the Italian genius still showed itself for a time in science. Not only in the sixteenth century but in the seventeenth we shall find epoch-making work by Italians, alike in astronomy, physics, mathematics, and medicine.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE REFORMATION AND THE GENIUS OF GERMANY

WE have mentioned Charles V, king of Spain and suzerain of Germany, as the dominating political figure in the first half of the sixteenth century. Round him indeed cluster the leading threads in Continental culture and Continental political growth, and the web they weave is growing thick. Grandson of Mary of Burgundy and Maximilian the Hapsburg Archduke of Austria, son of the mad Joanna (daughter of Ferdinand of Aragon and Isabella of Castile), he was by inheritance the ruler of Austria, Spain, the Netherlands, Naples, and by election Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, with distinct rights over Germany and vaguer rights over the North of Italy. The traditions of his house on both sides were despotic, but his own bent towards despotism was checked by a fine sense of what could and what could not be done with the different nationalities throughout his vast dominions. And among them are three who now begin to take effective part in the joint stream of European culture: Germany, the Netherlands, and Spain.

It is not a little remarkable and not altogether easy to understand why Germany had till then lagged behind England, France, and Italy in her general development. Her political position does not seem to have been substantially worse than theirs, though it is true that she had made far less progress towards national unity on the one hand, or democratic government on the other. The Emperor's lordship, for example,

was shadowy compared with the vigour of the monarchy at its strongest in France ; the German free cities had been more oligarchical and less independent than their most advanced contemporaries in Italy, and the commons at large had no such representation in the Diet as they had gained in the English Parliaments of Edward I. None the less, there had been vigorous, if spasmodic, efforts for organization and liberty. Towns such as Nuremberg that won the right to manage their own affairs reflect to this day the quality of their life in the fine architecture of their public and private buildings. The greatest of the Minnesängers, Walther v. der Vogelweide, was, we have already seen, at least as vitally interested in politics and religion as in love. Still, both in art, literature, and learning, as in politics, the Germans were behind their neighbours, and perhaps the fundamental reason is that the German genius was pre-eminently fitted for music, metaphysics, and science, and these, in their full development, seem only to appear late in any civilization and after a laborious accumulation of facts and tools. In any case it is to be noted that Germany's distinctive contribution to the culture of Europe during the long period from Henry the Fowler to the dawn of the Reformation lies in the realm of mystical theology, the side that would appeal most to a philosophic people in the Ages of Faith.

Thomas à Kempis was a German monk (1380–1471), and no manual of devotion has ever appealed to the world at large so persistently, in spite of its narrow outlook, as the "Imitation of Christ." And this because of its unwavering grip on the doctrine that a man's peace, his freedom from degradation, lies in the complete surrender of his will to a Will greater than his own or any other man's. à Kempis is only one in a long train of devotional writers penetrated with the monastic ideal, and that not in Germany alone, Jan Ruysbroek, for example, before him in Flanders (1293–1381), St. Catherine of Siena in Italy (1347–1380), Juliana of Norwich in England, St. Teresa later in Spain, and St. John of the Cross—but he out-distances them all in popular estimation, and with reason. Not only is he

absolutely in earnest—the others are that also—but he brings the task of self-conquest into close contact with ordinary life, while his book lies open to all men in virtue of his terse and vivid style, the sureness of his touch on the weak places of the heart, and the searching and ironic simplicity of his thought. It is impossible while reading à Kempis not to feel the emptiness of fine theory divorced from practice. "What will it avail thee to be engaged in profound reasonings concerning the Trinity, if thou be void of humility, and art thereby displeasing to the Trinity? Surely great words do not make a man holy and just." (I, 1.) If the world could follow à Kempis the root of all wars and tyrannies would be done away with for ever, seeing that he strikes dead at the heart of ambition.

Far less widely known, but yet with a wider range than à Kempis, is the earlier work of the Dominican Meister Eckhard (1260–1327), the contemporary of Dante, and a master to many mystics in his day. A modern reader, moreover, is attracted to him by his deep thirst for universal knowledge, a thirst that was to become so marked a feature in Germany's intellectual life, and by his never-failing sense of a fundamental unity with other men. à Kempis, at times, may seem exclusively concerned with the salvation of his own soul, but Eckhard speaks of St. Paul's cry, "I would that I were cut off from God for my friends' sake," as the highest possible example of love, "for God's sake to give up God." Again, he foreshadows our modern social gospel of mankind as an "organism" in his parable of the body: "If the foot could speak, it would confess that the eye was more to it just because it was in the head than if it were actually in the foot": so, and even more profoundly, the graces in another can be more intimately our own if we love them than if they were merely "ours." Again Eckhard's thirst for knowledge is bound up with a belief in the natural affinity of the soul with all things good, "the spark in man never extinguished." "He who has once felt the touch of Truth and Righteousness and Goodness can never turn away from them, not for one moment, not though all the pains of hell should hang on it." In one

place he goes so far as to say that if it were possible for God to be separated from the Truth and the soul had to choose, it would choose Truth. But knowledge of the Truth means for Eckhard far more than the orderly apprehension of "created things": it means insight into their ultimate cause and the ground of their unity, the source from which they derive "as waters from the sea, and to which they return again as rivers over the earth." The goal of life is the apprehension of this hidden unity coupled with the sense of a man's entire dependence on it, a goal that the individual can attain by persistent effort and prayer.

The danger of this attitude, as of so much mediæval mysticism, and particularly, perhaps, of German, is that it leads the mind away from the concrete facts of life and the scientific handling of the "created things," with which, after all, we have first and foremost to do. Broadly speaking, the whole of the modern world is in revolt from that attitude, and not without reason, but he who has never understood it has never come in sight of the summits to which man's thought can reach.

Nor, without understanding it and the reactions from it, can we comprehend the passion of the fanatical wars that meet us in the sixteenth century and the next. As a spiritual force, it was outworn for the time in Italy, where men were turning more and more to the interest and delight of the concrete, but elsewhere, and especially in Germany and Spain, it blazed out with renewed vigour and in strangely different forms. Along with it, as a rule, though sometimes also opposed to it, went the growing demand for liberty, liberty both of thought and action, and the interplay makes the period intensely complicated and intensely interesting. In Germany, perhaps, the situation was, on the whole, clearest; and Germany, under the rough bold generalship of Martin Luther, is rightly acknowledged as leader in the Reformation. There had been earlier forewarnings, notably in England under Wycliffe at the end of the fourteenth century, and in Bohemia through the more daring development of the Lollard doctrines by Huss. But Wycliffe had avoided any irreparable breach with consti-

tuted authority—"God must obey the Devil," he is said to have declared, deprecating rebellion with a true English feeling for the value of a settled order, however faulty. Huss had been burnt at the stake (1415), and the revolt of his Czech followers, anti-German and communistic as it was, put down in blood. In these earlier men we find the same fierce attack on the scandals among the clergy, the same championship, within limits, of private judgment, the same appeal to the individual conscience and the authority of the Bible, even against the authority of the Church. But Luther had something more, combining two other elements important and mutually opposed. He had in the first place, and in no slight degree, the mystical apprehension, felt so deeply by Eckhard and Thomas à Kempis, of personal union by " faith " with a Power behind all the shows of this world and the deeds of men. Hence the Lutheran insistence on " justification by faith " as something much beyond mere morality, and in this respect Luther, the Reformer and the Protestant, is notably mediæval, bearing indeed marked signs of his training as an Augustinian monk.

It is entirely in keeping with this deep element in his nature that he should have re-discovered with rapture the fourteenth century treatise known as the " Theologia Germanica," where the unknown author, writing in his native German, brings ideas such as Eckhard's home to the religious consciousness of simple men. A union with an Absolute Goodness greater than " this or that special good," a union of Love in which " all Self and Me and Mine and We and Ours " have " departed," that for Luther, as for this early writer and his fellows, was the living basis of the spiritual life. " I will say," wrote Luther, " though it be boasting of myself and ' I speak as a fool,' that next to the Bible and St. Augustine, no book hath ever come into my hands whence I have learnt, or would wish to learn, more of what God, and Christ, and man and all things are." [1]

So strong was Luther's sense of the need for such a union that like many theologians of not dissimilar temper then and

[1] From the preface to Susanna Winkworth's tr. of the *Theol. Germ.*

later—Calvin, for example, in France and Switzerland, Knox in Scotland, and the Puritans in England—he would on occasion scout as worthless any other goodness that could not be shown to depend directly on this supreme experience and on the Biblical texts that had wakened it to life. But, on the other hand, there was a genial, even a coarse, element in his nature that made him assert and re-assert the full claims of the flesh. A true German, he rejoiced in music, and linked *Wein* and *Weib* to *Gesang*. Hence his rejection of Monasticism, and here he was in line with the whole Renaissance movement. It was exactly the union of the two forces in his ardent and powerful temperament, the temperament, moreover, of a defiant reformer, that made him so universal a power.

Neither the mystical ardour nor the fighting spirit found a response in the Dutchman Erasmus, however warm his sympathy with the reaction from monasticism and scholasticism. Cultured, witty, and somewhat weak, Erasmus, like his nobler friends in England, the Oxford Reformers, Dean Colet and Sir Thomas More, Erasmus desired indeed to reform the abuses of the Church, but detested almost equally the rough breaking down of an old-established unity and the setting up in its place of one more theological dogmatism, one more rigid system of unintelligible beliefs on inscrutable matters. Why could not Christians be content with ordinary human reason and charity? Erasmus is in significant ways a forerunner of the modern attitude towards theology, and to Luther, inevitably, he seemed faint-hearted and half-hearted.

Luther, strong in "the liberty of a Christian man," a liberty depending on the mystical marriage of the soul with the Bridegroom Christ, felt no fear when he struck at the authority of the Papacy or the whole monastic system. There he stood firm and "could no other." But nevertheless, and this is noteworthy, he did not feel himself strong enough to depend on this mystical freedom alone, as many extremists did in Germany itself. Passionately he insisted on the absolute authority of Christ's words as found in the Bible and on the vital importance of Baptism and the Eucharist,

opening the way for a tyranny of dogma almost as oppressive as the one he did so much to overthrow. Great as was the service he rendered by translating the Bible into his native German and furthering the study of Latin, Greek, and Hebrew—"a language," he wrote, "is a scabbard for the sword of the Spirit"—this could not compensate for the harm of helping to rivet a dead text, however sublime, on the thoughts of living men. Yet it was only natural that Luther should seek a support for men's consciences in place of the one he had taken away.

His work in politics was parallel. Late in the day Germany had her Peasants' Rising, and many of them rose in the very name of the "Christian liberty" that Luther proclaimed. Fanatical, ill-organized, and scarcely understanding their own cause, the Peasants were none the less appealing not merely to fundamental principles of right and justice, but to the better mind of the German people as it had shown itself earlier. Gierke has made it clear that in the earlier Middle Ages Germany had been feeling her way confusedly towards a far richer ideal of political organization, secular or religious, than she ever actually attained. What she desired, hardly comprehending her own desire, was the union, in one Great Society, of many societies, each with its own special focus of active corporate life. But this impulse, an impulse reviving in modern days under such varied forms as Trade Unionism, Home Rule, Syndicalism, *Internationales*, was not supported or stabilized by any adequate unifying system, although isolated thinkers brooded on noble schemes. Gierke quotes, among other striking instances of such, the far-reaching projects adumbrated by Nicholas of Cues (1401–1464), a man also to be noted as a forerunner of Germany's work in philosophy and science. Deeply religious and penetrated with the religious vision of mankind as one people, Nicholas looked on government as in its essence both divine and popular. "In his eyes all earthly power proceeded, like man himself, primarily from God . . . but a God-inspired will of the community was the organ of this divine manifestation. It is just in the voluntary consent of the governed that a govern-

ment displays its divine origin : *tunc divina censetur, quando per concordantium omnium consensum a subiectis exoritur.*" [1]

Nicholas had definite proposals for realizing his ideal both in Church and State, being, as regards the former, in early days an adherent of the Conciliar movement and placing a General Council above the Pope, precisely because he held that in virtue of the representative character won through election a General Council would be the clearest medium of the General Will. But, as regards all such proposals as these, German thought had to contend not only with particularism, inertia, and the natural sins of man, but also by the close of the fifteenth century with the absolutist tendencies of Roman Law. For this there were several reasons. There was chaos, as we have seen, in Germany's political and judicial life ; university education came to her late, not till the latter part of the fourteenth century ; and neither her own laws nor Roman Law had been studied at an early period keenly and critically as law had been studied in England. Roman Law, on the other hand, as the fifteenth century closed, came in with all the prestige, as Maitland points out, of the Renaissance, and the prestige also, we may add, of its traditional connection with the Empire. Naturally its august, lucid, and coherent system appealed to men weary of chaos. But it struck hard, when adopted wholesale, at any principles of free association. In the Roman code there was no room for distinct organizations, no "empires within the Empire." The individual was dealt with directly by the sovereign, and therewith an end. And, as we saw, the idea of the sovereign as representing the people had become even in the best days of the Empire rather a pious wish than the expression of a living factor permeating the whole life of the nation. Furthermore, the code had never shaken itself free from the taint of slavery. Making all allowance, as Maitland does, for the benefits brought to Germany both by Italian science and by the training in systematic thought, we can still agree in his general conclusion that it was a deplorable day for Germany when

[1] Gierke, "Political Theories of the Middle Age," § vi, with other references (tr. by Maitland).

she "bowed her neck to the Roman yoke." [1] She did not even win the good of unification on this basis.

German particularism was now too strong for the Emperor ever to become the direct and efficient sovereign. The net result, by the end of the fifteenth century, was an advance towards absolute power for the petty princes, a check to the development of the free towns, and a definite worsening in the position of the peasants. More and more of these were actually classed as serfs, their rights lessened, and their labours and burdens increased. "What did Roman Law know of the old Germanic liberties?" asks Henderson. "The code of Justinian had no words for the different relations between master and man: the term *servus*, or slave, was a convenient one under which to group all peasants" ("Hist. of Germany," Vol. I, c. x.)

On the other hand, at the opening of the sixteenth century the peasants themselves were awakening to revolt, pricked by their own intolerable situation, stimulated by the spread of learning—printing, it should be remembered, was a German invention—above all, inspired by Luther's fiery preaching of a gospel that gave men the hope of freedom. The peasants buttressed their twelve articles with texts from the Bible, ending, "If we are deceived, let Luther correct us by Scripture." And at first Luther frankly blamed the lords for their oppressions and frankly admitted that some at least of the new demands were "just and equitable." [2]

To us indeed they seem surprisingly moderate, involving no more than the abolition of serfdom, freedom to choose a pastor for themselves—this, it should be noted, was the first demand—community of water, wood, and pasture, and relief from the crushing burdens of tithe and tax. But all the demands were rejected, and in the fighting that followed the excesses of the mob were countered by still more savage reprisals. And here it is painful to record the reactionary intolerance of Luther. His hatred of anarchy, which had already made him reject every Protestant who went farther

[1] Introduction to his tr. of Gierke, *op. cit.*
[2] d'Aubigné, "History of the Reformation."

than himself made him brutal towards the peasants. Just as Roman law could satisfy itself with a lip-homage to the general principle of human freedom while making definite arrangements for the torture of slaves, so Luther, while defying Pope and Church on behalf of individual Christian men, saw no reason to protest against selling those very men, if they were "servants," "at will, like other animals." On those who dared to protest he turned with fury, and it is idle to attempt excuse for his share in the ferocity with which the Peasants' Rising was suppressed. Once they had risen in arms and plundered "convents and castles," he held them to deserve "the death of body and soul." They were to be killed "like mad dogs."

We can only admit that Luther was essentially an assailant, not a constructive genius. Time after time he had to fall back on systems outworn or makeshift. Just as he had nothing to put in the place of Papal infallibility but Biblical infallibility, so he had nothing to offer the peasants but renewed submission to their lords. Again, in every "Reformed" principality, the headship of the believers which he had taken from the Papacy he transferred simply to the secular ruler. "The Papal order being abolished," he wrote to the Elector of Saxony, "it is your duty to regulate these things: no other person cares about them, no other can, and no other ought to do so."

Luther's action here helped towards the compromise of "*cujus regio, ejus religio*," agreed to shortly after his own death in 1546, and closing the first stage of the religious struggle (Peace of Augsburg, 1554). Every prince was allowed to decide on the form of faith for his own province, and, the number of principalities being large, the provision allowed after all a substantial modicum of religious liberty, since a Lutheran could leave a Roman Catholic district or a Catholic a Lutheran without exiling himself from Germany. But, obviously, it was a compromise that could scarcely be expected to last. It gave but a breathing-space before the Thirty Years' War.

The mingled hope and gloom of this time is concentrated

in the mysterious "Melencolia" engraved by Albrecht Dürer, one of the few great painters Germany ever produced, faultier far, it is true, than his delightful contemporary Holbein, but with access to strange regions of the imagination where Holbein could never have ventured. A massive womanly figure, plunged in thought, sits brooding among a litter of books, instruments, and symbols, beyond her own power to interpret or put to use. She has wings, but they are not strong enough to lift her; and the rainbow-lit sky is stormy. For once at least Dürer's tendency to over-elaboration of detail, a fault common to so much German art, is dominated by a superb design in which form and significance are fused.

For the fact that the religious ferment did not lead at once into the chaos of the Thirty Years' War we have, in the main, three elements to thank: German particularism itself, which left the Emperor faced with a number of sturdy cities and provinces, many of whom were in avowed sympathy with Reformist doctrines, Luther's courageous common sense and tolerance—"I can by no means admit that false teachers should be put to death"—and lastly, Charles V's own wily statecraft which told him that he could not afford to alienate a virile people by insisting on extreme measures against the Protestant leaders.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE DOMINANCE OF SPAIN

SIMILAR caution marked the dealings of Charles with the Netherlands, where he was born. He saw well enough that Calvinism was making headway there, and his heart's desire was to "cut out the root of heresy," but, though he set up an Inquisition and executed sanguinary edicts, he was prudent enough to leave the administration of them to the natives, always on his guard, as he warned his son to be, against friction between Spaniard and Fleming.

In Spain, where, after all, he came to feel most at home, full rein could be given to his despotic tendencies both in Church and State.

That strange country had been unified politically by the marriage of his grandparents, Ferdinand of Aragon and Isabella of Castile, and they had employed religious bigotry to cement their work, Isabella at least with a genuine conviction that made her influence both more inspiring and more dangerous. It was she who revived the Inquisition under Torquemada; she who was foremost in completing the reconquest of Spain by the capture of Granada with its jewelled Alhambra, the last monument of Moorish art in its decline; it was at the height of her triumph that the harsh edict went out for the expulsion of the Jews.

The policy of the two "Catholic Kings" was, it is generally admitted, only the culmination of a long process. For seven centuries the Christian had struggled to reconquer Spain; he had succeeded inch by inch, and with the struggle the bitterness had grown ever more bitter. We have mentioned already

St. Dominic's gospel of persecution, and the Moslem reaction towards narrow orthodoxy after Averroës. The age-long conflict and the ultimate triumph acting on a people naturally proud, fierce, and visionary, produced only too easily a nation of relentless warriors, bigoted and aggressive, confident that they were commissioned by God to rule the world in the interests of the orthodox Faith. Ignatius Loyola, the founder of the Jesuits, is a characteristic type. Curiously similar, through all differences, in point of theological passion to his antagonist and contemporary Luther, he is furthermore, and above everything, a soldier: the vow of obedience in his devoted world-wide Society of Jesus rings out like a military oath and the threats of hell recur like the penalties of a drum-head court-martial. The unmistakable menace to freedom of thought was the more ominous because it chimed in with the dominant spirit of the Spanish people. Their mystics (St. John of the Cross, St. Teresa, and many of lesser note) were all devoted Romanists. The people at large had regained their country for themselves by fighting the infidel like soldiers, and like soldiers they were prepared to think, to act, and to die. An engrained contempt for ordinary craftsmanship and trade had been further stimulated by the racial and religious hostility against the Arabs, the Moors, and the Jews, who, on their side, never lost the commercial lead that they won in the early days of the invasion. A blundering policy in economics made matters worse: prohibition of valuable exports and heavy dues on all sales even within the country could not make up for the exemption of nobles and clergy from taxation: they could only choke, and they did choke, the natural channels of trade.

For a time Spain was spared the full consequences of this strangling system by the discovery of the New World. The enterprise of her sister Portugal opened the way Eastwards, Prince Henry the Navigator sending an expedition to the Azores in 1460, Bartolommeo Diaz rounding the Cape of Good Hope in 1486, and Vasco da Gama reaching India in 1498. Westwards, the genius of the Italian Columbus, recognized and employed by Isabella, sought another route to the Indian

regions and found instead the way to the Americas (1492).

Add to this the accession of power, apparently immense, given by the vast European possessions of Charles V, and it is not surprising that Spain in the sixteenth century felt herself at the top of golden opportunities and ready to welcome a despotism that promised her both this world and the next. There were, it is true, certain struggles for freedom, just as there were leanings towards Protestantism, for all such movements were international, but heresy was stamped out by an Inquisition that the majority of the people approved, and the hopes of popular representation were destroyed by the animosity between the nobles and the non-privileged orders. Both classes were left too weak to make head against the quiet, steady autocracy of Charles V. Even the example of Aragon with its more truly representative Cortes —that Aragon which Isabella had declared (because of its relative freedom) must be "conquered" by her husband and herself—could not achieve any political liberty for the rest of Spain. The Emperor could leave to his son Philip II a submissive country, the ready tool for his fanatical ambition.

But while we note these dangers to liberty it is important to recognize the force that the people gained by the active sense of a common mission and that mission divine. In the work of a sensitive Greek, the painter still known as El Greco (1548–1625), the modern world can trace as in a magical mirror the intensity and strange, fierce dignity of the period, and the grim apocalyptic visions that must have floated before many a Spanish mind, even if we see also in lower moods signs of an exaggerated religiosity cloaking sheer pride and lust. The readiness of a Greek to accept a visionary, even an extravagant, outlook recalls the mood of the Byzantine artists, and is in curious contrast with the spirit of classic Hellenism, poised, exquisite and strong, on what was strongest and fairest in this world. Equally curious is the marked effect El Greco has produced to-day on artists and critics of the most modern sympathies, utterly out of sympathy as they are with his theology. He attracts an age, weary of

photographic verisimilitude, by the sharp strength of his design, gaunt flaming forms knit together by their own rhythm, and calling up from realms beyond appearance new and indescribable impressions.

Among native Spaniards his nearest analogue is perhaps the dramatist Calderon (1601–1687), in whose work the Devil enters as an actual and terrible *dramatis persona*, and human beings live a fantastic life, high-strained, often over-strained, but still of a dignity and beauty that explains his appeal to Shelley.

What Spanish life and Spanish art lacked in general were the qualities of sobriety, tenderness, and humour. And yet Spain brought forth in these two centuries, the sixteenth and seventeenth, two men to show her power exactly here, Cervantes for humour and tenderness, Velazquez for tenderness and gravity, both men for a sober facing of the world, and both also with a native understanding of that lofty distinction and proud sense of honour that is peculiar to Spain. Cervantes was Shakespeare's contemporary, died indeed in the very same year, 1616, and it is no idle fancy to compare the two. Without attempting to put the Spaniard on a level with the Englishman, we can recognize in Cervantes the Shakespearian sympathy, intimate and critical, that made him at once appreciate romance and caricature it, the broad fun and gentle ironic laughter that could embrace both Sancho and the Don, give Sancho the precedence in all matters of mother-wit and common sense, and yet show his master far the greater man, a devotedness in every ludicrous energy of his that wins the devotion of his shrewder servant and the love of every intelligent reader. The sweet wind of laughter that blows through "Don Quixote," how was it that it did not blow all tyranny and self-deceit away?

The same sort of question rises as we study the portraits Velazquez painted (1599–1660). He stands, it is admitted, among the kings of painting for the sheer beauty of his craftsmanship, (he had entered into the Italian inheritance and used its lessons to develop his own gifts), his power of lovely brushwork, his feeling for subtle gradations of quiet tone, for space and atmosphere, for dignity and unity of impression, and

for that sense of reality which is quite other than vulgar illusion. So much is admitted, but it is often said that he had no inner vision, gives no sign of heart in his work, could only paint what he "saw." Yet probably it is only his soberness and self-restraint both in conception and design that hide from the impatient observer his powers of penetration and pity. He will not over-emphasize for any obtuseness of the critic. He paints men and women in their weakness as a Recording Angel might: without anger, but without extenuation. If it were not for the blind fatuity of mortals we could ask in wonder how Philip IV, unmasked in his sodden old age, or Innocent X in his grasping cupidity and impotent ferocity, could possibly have accepted with complacency these damning statements of themselves. But, moreover, among such creatures, debased and menacing, Velazquez will paint us children, with a sense of their freshness, their naturalness, their morning joyfulness that has never been surpassed. Most appealing of all his works are the pictures of those dwarfs whom the cruel Court of Spain bred up for its own amusement. The painter, it is plain to see, understood them all, as they endured the humiliations they were brave enough to hide from others—the defiant alert "Inglese," scarcely taller than the splendid full-grown hound he is set to hold, but ready to run a man through the body who dared openly to pity him; the tiny crippled scholar, brooding wistfully over the book almost larger than himself; the deformed heroic little figure seated on the ground, gazing out of the picture into the eyes, one fancies, that had taken him off his guard by their quiet sympathy, the stern eyes of Velazquez softened by an infinite compassion.

But two men, even such men as Cervantes and Velazquez, cannot save a nation. Scarcely another name can be found among the great men of Renaissance Spain as working for free criticism. The Inquisition did its work too well. After Philip II the whole trend of Spain, speaking broadly, is towards dominion and persecution. And so, without liberty, the stimulating effect of unity dies away and Spain at the close of the seventeenth century sinks down into stagnation.

A DWARF
(From the Painting by Velazquez, Madrid)

CHAPTER XXV

THE RISE OF THE DUTCH REPUBLIC AND THE DECLINE OF SPAIN

FOR the Netherlands, for France, and for England Philip II had planned either persecution or conquest or both. Everywhere, more or less completely, he failed. In France, his attempt at a universal league against heretics was countered by the Huguenot resistance, and the dream of the French crown for himself died in the face of the national distaste for a foreigner. The sharpest single stroke against his designs was dealt by the defeat of the Armada (1588) at the hands of an England roused in defence of herself and the Reformers, a defeat the more galling after his position as Mary Tudor's husband. But the most dramatic struggle was in the Netherlands, where the tenacity of a stubborn people joined forces with the genius of a born ruler, William the Silent, to defy and defeat a tyranny that seemed all but invincible. William of Orange, born in Germany and of German blood crossed with Dutch, had thrown in his lot with the Netherlands from youth. He had been singled out for special favour when only a lad by Charles V, who prided himself with some reason on an eye for men, and it was on his shoulder that the Emperor leaned when he came into the great Hall at Brussels to abdicate in favour of Philip his son (1555). Trained in statecraft under a despot, and bred a Catholic though born of Lutheran parents, it was only gradually, and by the shock of persecution on a generous and resolute nature, that William grew into the rebel leader of a Protestant Republic. The most brilliant and eloquent of

men, with a tongue that could " turn all the gentlemen at court any way he liked," he won his paradoxical name of " the Silent " by his reticence on an occasion crucial both for himself and Europe. Riding alone with Henri II of France in the Bois de Vincennes, he listened, without betraying his horror by a word, while Henri expounded as to a sympathetic hearer " all the details of the plan arranged between the King of Spain and himself for the rooting out and rigorous punishment of the heretics." Years afterwards, in the " Apology " that Orange published when banned as a traitor by Philip, he spoke of the deep effect the revelation had made on him. For the time he acted cautiously but swiftly. He had learnt that the Spanish forces in the Netherlands were to be the tools for massacre ; he warned his country of the danger, and henceforward their removal became one of his cardinal demands. But this, like the ending of the Inquisition and the restoration of the old liberties, Philip would never grant, and step by step the fearful cruelties of the persecution drove Orange into definite revolt. Once the breach was made he never faltered, not even when the friends of freedom were driven back on a strip of territory barely two miles broad with no help but from the wild " Beggars of the Sea," half pirates, half patriots, and from the sea itself in which they were ready, if need were, to drown what was left to them of the land.

Spenser, exaggerating as usual the part played by England under the " Faery Queene " in succouring the distressed, does not exaggerate the desolation of Belgé in her dark hour :

" ' Ay me ' (said she) ' and whither shall I go ?
Are not all places full of forraine powres ?
My pallaces possessëd of my foe,
My cities sackt, and their sky-threating towres
Razëd and made smooth fields now full of flowres ?
Only those marishes and myrie bogs
In which the fearefull ewftes do build their bowres
Yeild me an hostry 'mongst the croking frogs,
And harbour here in safety from those ravenous dogs.' " [1]

[1] " Faery Queene," Bk. V. Canto 5, Stanza 23.

Orange had, as a fact, little to look for from any helper beyond those marishes and bogs. It was on them and their people he had to rely. And all the while, far in advance of his age, he toiled to bring about mutual tolerance among his countrymen, Catholics and Protestants alike. ("The difference," he kept on repeating in his large way, "the difference is not enough to keep you apart."[1]) If he could have had his heart's desire, the ten Flemish provinces, mainly Catholic, would have been united permanently with the seven of the North, Dutch and fiercely Calvinist. But the Union broke up, even before his death, under the stress of religious bigotry, the difference of race and tradition, and the desperate conflict against Spain, a conflict that lasted for more than a generation with heart-breaking alternations of success and defeat. It ended finally early in the seventeenth century with the full triumph of Holland. But that triumph William never lived to see. In 1584 he was struck down by a fanatical assassin, who held to the last, through all the torments of his savage punishment, that he had done God service. William would not have sanctioned the torture. He had already forbidden it in the case of men who had tried to murder him before, men whose lives he sought to spare. His dying cry sums up the temper of his life at the close: "Mon Dieu, ayez pitié de mon âme, mon Dieu, ayez pitié de ce pauvre peuple"—words written round his noble portrait at the Hague.

A greater statesman never lived, nor a more lovable character. Under him the independent nation of Holland rose to become a rallying-ground and refuge for liberty and for all that liberty could nurture. In the seventeenth century, while Spain was sinking under the weight of her own tyrannical system, her enemies defying her, her population crushed and impoverished, Holland could be a home alike for citizens and foreigners. The French Descartes found refuge there, and the forbears of the Jew Spinoza: there the fathers of New England halted before they made their way to America: from there Grotius put forward his plea for International Law; and there a broad and valiant humanity sustained

[1] From "William the Silent," by F. Harrison.

the heart of the painter Rembrandt (1607–1699). Dutch painting before Rembrandt shows a high degree of academic accomplishment and but little else. In Rembrandt we have a master in dramatic power and the understanding of expressive tone and form, lord in particular over the emotional effects of shadow and light. It is possible to trace in his work two distinct tendencies which in his large nature balance and develop one another until in his last and finest period they coalesce and find their fit expression in a grave and deep simplicity of design. Like his compatriots, he was keenly interested in ordinary everyday objects, their shapes and surprises, but, unlike them, he was also keenly alive to the charm of the mysterious, remote, and unexplored. The two interests became fused, and in the end we gaze with equal wonder at the sheer beauty and mystery that he saw in the light on the walls of a cellar and in the dust of a barè studio, at his gallant Polish horseman riding out alone in the autumn evening alert on a desperate quest, at the dreadful majesty of his final Anatomy Lesson or of his Flayed Ox hanging in the common slaughter-house, at the tenderness of his worn Christ suddenly recognized in the shadows of the inn at Emmaus, or at the superhuman dignity of his own figure, an old and ruined man, bankrupt, and seated as on a throne with the right to judge the world.

There is a curious and very interesting likeness, among many obvious differences, between himself and his contemporary Velazquez—each of them nurtured in a strong and self-confident community, but the one among aristocrats, the other among plebeians, each of them outstripping his limitations by his sincerity and intensity of vision, a double vision embracing both the outer world of space and light and the inner world of human character. Rembrandt's is the wider nature and the richer, but he and Velazquez would have understood one another. The proud Spaniard had really more in common with the Dutch peasant than with the Flemish courtier Rubens (1577–1640), whom he actually met as ambassador in Spain. The gifts of Rubens, certainly, a lusty Northerner of genius delighting in the plenitude of the

FAUST AND THE MAGIC DISK
(From an Etching by Rembrandt, British Museum)

Renaissance, are not fit subjects for contempt. His sumptuous colour, his buoyant and intricate rhythms, his exultant expression of the *joie de vivre*, have won, and deserve to win, enlightened admiration. But the thinness of his sentiment and the grossness of his taste leave something repellent and superficial in all but the very finest of his work where his sympathy for some exuberant expression of life, the beauty, say, of a young strong woman, or of a tiger-cub, or of a glowing autumn landscape where the clouds chase the light, or of a rollicking Flemish dance in the open air, kindle him to a more than common eagerness. Of the inner world Rubens knew and cared little or nothing.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE RENAISSANCE IN FRANCE: RABELAIS, MONTAIGNE, AND THE HUGUENOTS

THE sixteenth century that meant so much for Italy, Spain, Holland, and Germany, was at least as fruitful for France and England. After the Hundred Years' War, which had checked French culture almost as much as English, France was gradually restored through the statecraft of Louis XI and prepared for the learning and the exuberance of the Renaissance. Even during the war the brilliant picturesqueness of Froissart, friend both of England and France, the quiet incisiveness of Commines, biographer of Louis XI, and the wild, wistful poetry of Villon, are enough to show the powers latent in the people. In Villon we hear a sharp-sweet note of poetry rare indeed in France. But, though rare, it is not without significant parallel. Verlaine, for example, is blood-brother to the mediæval scamp. They both draw a peculiar charm out of vice and shame and the fear of death and the biting regret for wasted youth.

> "Qu'as-tu fait, O toi que voilà,
> Pleurant sans cesse,
> Dis, qu'as tu fait, toi que voilà,
> De ta jeunesse?"

It is the same haunting cry as in Villon's futile self-reproach, the same plaintive melody as in the never-hackneyed ballad where the vanished lovely ladies of the past drift through the poet's fancy like the ghosts of falling snowflakes. Death has taken them as he takes all lovely things:

" Où sont les gracieux gallans
Que je suivoye au temps jadis
Si bien chantans, si bien parlans,
Si plaisans en faiz et en diz ? "

" Where are they now, the gallant lads
Whom I followed in bygone days,
Lords of song, and speech, and jest,
Gracious in all their words and ways ? "

Death has made them a loathing and a horror.

But at the opening of the sixteenth century we swing out from mediæval thoughts of death into a sunlit burst of activity, a zest both for learning and life. And here the dominating figure is without question Rabelais (1490–1553). It has been said that he incarnates the very spirit of the full Renaissance, its boundless vitality and freedom, its contempt of outworn formulas, its confident appeal to reason, its unquenchable laughter, its hatred of restraint, its rollicking obscenity.

So stimulating in Rabelais is the torrent of this Aristophanic compound that at moments the reader feels as though Falstaff were with him transfigured into a scholar, a generous moralist, a statesman, and a religious reformer, without ever ceasing to be Falstaff. But there are other moments, many of them, when the same reader wearies intolerably of the Gallic cock on the Gallic dunghill and would welcome Mrs. Grundy herself as a relief from the obsession of indecency. Yet that obsession is bound up for Rabelais with a belief vital to him, and most inspiring to Europe, the belief in human nature and all its functions. Meredith has said of St. Anthony that seeing the Hog in Nature he took Nature for the Hog and turned from the sight in disgust. Rabelais, we might add, also saw the Hog, but worshipping Nature, delighted to worship it. The confusion is the cause of infinite mischief in both directions, and yet Rabelais himself at his best indicates the way out. The huge force of lusty life in Gargantua and Pantagruel, horrible if merely thwarted or merely starved, equally horrible if left to run wild, can come to its own when nurtured on sound knowledge and disciplined by the training of body and mind. In this sense Rabelais revives the noblest pagan

ideals for education and anticipates the modern. Ponocrates, the "Master of Toil," whose scholar is called Gladheart (Eudemon), rescues the lubberly Gargantua from his lounging and guzzling under his old schoolmasters, the lazy mediæval "Sophisters," makes an athlete of him and puts him "into such a road and way of studying that he lost not one hour in the day."[1]

Rabelais' appetite is not more giant for carnal food than for knowledge. His demands for his scholars are insatiable: they must be given all the wisdom of the ancients, history, cosmography, "the liberal arts of geometry, arithmetic, and music," Greek, "without which a man may be ashamed to account himself a scholar," and all other learned languages, and then the full knowledge by direct observation of "the works of Nature," those vast sciences, as yet unknown how vast, now beginning to open before men's eyes. And to crown all, the conclusion, since "knowledge without conscience is but the ruin of the soul, it behoveth thee to serve, to love and to fear God, and on Him to cast all thy thoughts and all thy hope and by faith formed in charity to cleave unto Him, so that thou mayest never be separated from Him by thy sins." So trained, the scholar is free to enter Gargantua's Abbey of Thélème (θέλημα), the Monastery of Man's Will,[2] over the entrance to which is engraved the motto

"Fay ce que voudras,"
"Do what thou wilt,"

"because men that are free, well-born, well-bred and conversant in honest companies, have naturally an instinct and spur that prompteth them unto virtuous actions and withdraws them from vice, which is called Honour." The words ring with the love of liberty, a force sufficient in Rabelais' view, if sustained by reason, to fill the place of all authority. The ring of it is heard even more strongly in the next sonorous period: "Those same men, when by base subjection and constraint they are brought under and kept down, turn aside

[1] Bk. i. cc. 15–24, Urquhart's translation.
[2] See above on Dante, p. 110.

from that noble disposition by which they formerly were inclined to virtue to shake off and break that bond of servitude wherein they are so tyrannously enslaved ; for it is agreeable with the nature of man to long after things forbidden and to desire what is denied."

The old order of unity under the Church was passing away, the dream of unity based on a rigid acceptance of the Bible was doomed at its birth, the hope of the future was to lie in a unity found in science and freedom, and Rabelais is one of the first and most remarkable of its gospellers, if we may use so serious a term of a humorist so outrageous. It says much for the richness of the French temperament that the age of Rabelais was also the age of Calvin, the most doctrinaire of thinkers, fast-bound in the sternest of theologies and the narrowest of moralities. Yet with Calvin also the appeal to the intellect was incessant, and once he had formed his community of believers he too was prepared to trust them with their own self-direction. Thus it came about that, self-exiled from France to Geneva, he strengthened the foundations of that self-governing community which was to inspire Rousseau with the most remarkable political gospel of the eighteenth century.

Prognostics of the coming religious struggle meet us in Rabelais. As might be expected, he mocks at superstition, gibes at the monks, tends obviously to the Reformed doctrines, notably in his dignified account of the old free-thinker's death—a beautiful passage set in a sea of filth—but he is always careful to guard himself against theological controversy. Of that he has a distrust as shrewd as he has of war. In his attack on what we should now call " aggressive Imperialism " he reminds us vividly of More and Erasmus. More's " Utopia," by the way, he appears to have read and admired, since he uses the name for Gargantua's kingdom. " The time is not now as formerly to conquer the kingdoms of our neighbour princes, and to build up our own greatness upon the loss of our nearest Christian brother. This imitation of the ancient Herculeses, Alexanders, Hannibals, Scipios, Cæsars, and other such heroes is quite contrary to the profession of the gospel of

Christ, by which we are commanded to preserve, keep, rule and govern every man his own country and lands, and not in a hostile manner invade others ; and that which heretofore the Barbars and Saracens called prowess and valour, we do now call robbery, thievery, and wickedness."

So have Europe's great men spoken to her again and again, but Europe has seldom listened.

What we miss in Rabelais, amid all his wealth of humanity, wit, thought and humour, is the peculiar quality of poetry, and if he had had this, maybe he would never have choked us with foulness. That quality is perhaps indefinable, certainly by the present writer, but it can be recognized, and it is a quality that we miss perpetually in the literature of France and in her art, always excepting her great cathedrals. It is not to be identified with imagination. The French have abundance of imagination, nothing indeed is more distinctive in their masterpieces than their formidable power of combining a close grip on the actual with the impression of huge uncomprehended forces looming up behind and beyond appearances. Balzac is a supreme example, but we can feel the same thing in writers as far apart as Molière, Pascal, Flaubert, or painters such as Degas, Manet, Cézanne. All artists, doubtless, combine the actual with the imagined, but the French are distinguished by the sharpness of the clash with which they bring the two together. And they do this, as a rule, not in the way that we may call, for want of another word, the way of " poetry," the way of Botticelli, for example, in painting, or Keats and Shelley in verse, or Mozart in music, the way that leads to the apprehension " under the form of Beauty " of the whole universe. And to say this is nowise to discredit French art. On the contrary, it helps us to recognize a stark and tonic quality in their work, by comparison with which many of our English treasures seem swathed in a mere golden mist of sentiment.

To each method its own triumphs and its own limitations. Certainly the typical genius of French literature, speaking broadly, seems less suited to poetry in the technical sense, with its rapturous ecstasies of rhythm, than to the more

scientific, cool, and precise language of prose. In any case there can be no question that the French poets of the sixteenth century, Marot, Ronsard, and his followers in the Pléiade, are not men of Rabelais' calibre. Perhaps their chief significance lies in their enthusiasm for learning and their insistence that poetry, like other branches of art, needed a man's wholehearted service throughout his life, an insistence that has done much to foster the devotion paid ever since to literature in France. But also it had its drawbacks, perhaps because, as we have suggested, the poetic spirit proper was not strong enough in the French genius. The real, if slender stream of inspiration in Ronsard and his fellows seems often clogged by alien growths. And often too the writers chose the wrong models: Horace, for example, the least poetic among poets, instead of Simonides, as later on the dramatists chose Seneca instead of Sophocles.

The name of Marot, himself attacked and exiled for heresy, anticipates, like the name of Rabelais, the wars of religion —Marot, whose metrical version of the Psalms was sung by Huguenots in France and Calvinists in the Netherlands at the most stirring crises of their fate; Marot whose charming fables, models for La Fontaine later on, have more than a touch of wistfulness in their gaiety:

> "and all the while,
> Tears in my eyes, I sing to make you smile."

There was cause enough for tears when the wars broke out finally after the death of Henri II at the turn of the century (1562), and rolled on through the horrors of Catherine de Medici's ascendency and the massacre of the St. Bartholomew (1572), complicated by struggles for political liberty and intrigues of sheer ambition, until the pacification a whole generation later (1593), under Henri IV, the quondam Huguenot leader, King of Navarre. Accepting the Mass with a grin for the sake of Paris and peace, Henri had at least the qualities of his defects and refused to persecute the opinions he had tossed aside. The Edict of Nantes (1598) gave indeed "to the Protestants of France a far better position than was

accorded to religious dissidents in any other European state." (Grant, *op. cit.*) They could practise their rites freely, public careers were open to them, and certain towns, notably La Rochelle, were practically handed over to their control. Such freedom was a counterpoise to the still growing power of the monarchy, growing largely as ar esult of the long civil war. But the equilibrium was not destined to last. As in Germany and England, so in France, the latter part of the sixteenth century saw a truce, grateful indeed and valuable, but unstable.

During the long struggle Montaigne, one of the first and most famous of essayists, stood aloof. "Toute ma petite prudence, en ces guerres civiles où nous sommes, s'employe à ce qu'elles n'interrompent ma liberté d'aller et venir." (Bk. iii. c. 13.) Nevertheless, in the very coolness of that detached sentence runs a love of personal freedom that makes us recognize the compatriot of Rabelais. Equally marked is Montaigne's dislike of bigotry. "Après tout, c'est mettre ses conjectures à bien haut prix que d'en faire cuire un homme tout vif" (Bk. iii. c. 11). ("After all, we rate our guesses uncommonly high if we roast a man alive because of them.") A century before Descartes, he is the first in the new Europe to advocate the claims of philosophic doubt, and here his study of Socrates stood him in good stead. Man, he says, recalling Aristotle, has "a natural desire of knowledge." But he insists on putting all so-called knowledge to the test. He would infinitely prefer agnosticism to parrot formulas. "Sçavoir par cœur, ce n'est pas sçavoir," he says in his admirable brooding on education. The fallacy of literal inspiration could never have entangled him; men, he foresaw, would quarrel as acrimoniously over interpretation as over anything else. "Ceux-là se moquent, qui pensent appétisser nos débats, et les arrester, en nous r'appellant à l'expresse parole de la Bible." Not that he wanted an end put to discussion. In words kindling to a warmth surprising in him —never found elsewhere except in the passage on friendship or the praise of Socrates—he cries out that there is room, endless room for progress in thought, "Il y a toujours

place pour un suivant, oui, et pour nous-mesmes, et route par ailleurs. Il n'y a point de fin en nos inquisitions. Nostre fin est en l'autre monde. C'est signe de racourcissement d'esprit quand il se contente : ou signe de lasseté. Nul esprit genereux ne s'arreste en soy." (" There is always room for a successor, yes, and for ourselves, and other paths to travel. There can be no end to our search. Our end is in the other world. Contentment is a sign that our spirit has shrunk or that it is tired. No generous spirit can rest in itself.")

There is much that is repellent in Montaigne, not least his cold play with sensuality, but apart from the charm of his polished wit and candour, his clear and arrowy style, this passion for Reason helps to explain the attraction he has had for those he would himself have called " des âmes bien nées." And we must add his one experience of friendship, deep and warm enough to endear him to Shakespeare, and his urbane humanity. Disliking all tyranny, a dislike fostered by his love of Roman literature in its greatest period, this self-possessed Epicurean, though without the energy to fight oppression in the open field, shoots his light, keen shafts from under the shield of irony against its absurdities and cruelties. " Ce que j'adore moy-mesme aux Roys, c'est la foule de leurs adorateurs. Toute inclination et soubmission leur est deuë, sauf celle de l'entendement. Ma raison n'est pas duite à se courber et fleschir, ce sont mes genoux." (" What I myself really adore in Kings is the crowd of their adorers. We owe them every respect and all submission, save the submission of the understanding. My reason is not bound to yield and bend, only my knees.")

His bland contempt for the injustice of the law-courts supports in its own way the rushing invectives of Rabelais. " Or les loix se maintiennent en crédit non par ce qu'elles sont justes, mais par ce qu'elles sont loix. C'est le fondement mystique de leur authorité ; elles n'en ont point d'autre. Qui bien leur sert. Elles sont souvent faites par des sots. Plus souvent par des gens qui en haine d'équalité ont faute d'équité. Mais toujours par des hommes, autheurs vains et irrésolus." (" The laws hold their high position not because they are just

but because they are laws. That is the mystical basis of their authority. They have no other. And it stands them in good stead. They are often made by fools. Still more often by those who, because they hate equality, fail in equity. But always by men, that is to say, by makers who are vain and weak.")

It is the note repeated in various tones by Voltaire, Renan, Anatole France. Anatole France must envy the page full of pity and laughter concerning "the poor devils" who were hanged through a miscarriage of justice. The mistake was known in time, and might have been repaired, only that precedent had to be considered and prestige upheld. Other men, whose fate did not touch the majesty of the law, might have been saved: "les miens furent pendus irréparablement."

We cannot take leave of the sixteenth century in France without noting the impetus given to political thought by the wars of religion. Their debit account is heavy, and this at least may be put to their credit. The Huguenots, on the one hand, appealing to a law higher than any human authority, stimulated to fresh purpose old speculations on the nature and limits of government and sovereignty. Agrippa d'Aubigné, for example, speaks with admiration of the pamphlet, "Vindiciæ contra tyrannos," the work in fact of a co-religionist, Hubert Languet: "Là estoit amplement traité jusque où s'estend l'obéissance aux Rois, à quelles causes et par quels moyens on peut prendre les armes" ("Histoire Universelle," ii. c. xvii.). On the other hand, and of almost equal importance, should be placed the projects of the pacificators. The name of Henri Quatre was associated after his death —though probably without authority and simply as a pious fraud—by his able Finance Minister, the Huguenot Sully, with the scheme of a Grand Design for stabilizing Europe by an alliance between her leading nations. A shattering end had been put to the old dream of uniting Christendom under one head and with one faith, the dream of Dante's "De Monarchia." But here we find at least adumbrated a fresh policy of union that might conceivably take its place, a policy of something not unlike federation. Sully's scheme, with all

its defects, is memorable as inaugurating modern attempts to think out—and in our own days, maybe, to work out—a practicable plan " by which all Europe might be regulated and governed as one great family." [1]

The more visionary brooding over Utopias, felt in Rabelais, More, Erasmus, even Montaigne, points in the same direction. Men were looking for a fresh principle of harmony and peace on which to reconstruct society. In the next century Grotius in Holland (1583–1645), horrified at war persisting and the cruelty of war increasing, took the step—small in itself, but big, it may be, with consequence—of urging nations to agree deliberately on laws limiting the nature of their attacks. The controversies Grotius raised are not yet solved, and he himself, it may be granted, was not a man of first-rate intellect. But he is noteworthy for stating, bravely and forcibly and with his own preference clear, the two opposing views on the choice between which the progress of the world may prove to hang : one, that everything was permissible to the soldier, since laws were silent when weapons spoke ; and the other, that war, though a recourse to force, need not, and should not be a recourse to *unlimited* force, but that always and everywhere the voices of reason, humanity, and moderation should be heard. Hence, and with good cause, our system of international law, inchoate and faulty though it is, looks to Grotius with gratitude as one of its founders.

[1] From the eighteenth-century translation now reprinted in the Grotius Society Publications.

CHAPTER XXVII

THE RENAISSANCE IN ENGLAND: ELIZABETHAN LITERATURE

IT is strange to turn from Montaigne's French wit, cool, disillusioned, kindly, and mordant, to the joy and excitement that mark the Renaissance in England. Rabelais, writing before the tragedy of the Huguenot wars, is perhaps nearest to the temper of the Elizabethans, just as it was an Englishman with the Elizabethan tradition, Urquhart, who helped to translate him with such surprising success. But Rabelais, as we have insisted, had nothing of the poet in him, and the Elizabethans are pre-eminently poets. Signs of the coming exuberance had already appeared. Even during the desolating Wars of the Roses Malory's work on the old romances shows that the appetite for chivalrous and heroic literature was still somewhere alive. And the ballads of Scotland and the Border point in the same direction. We have scarcely sufficient knowledge to enable us to answer all the questions about the date and origin of ballad poetry, but it seems clear that good ballads were written in the fifteenth century, and a good ballad must not only tell its story tersely and with spirit, it must also carry in it something that thrills and warms the heart. A people may not follow up the promise of its ballads, but the promise is the promise of a rich humanity.

When the civil strife was at last closed by the Tudor monarchy and the two Roses were made one, the nation, released, sprang forward with a bound towards other and finer activities. England, under Henry VIII, began to take

her full share in the general revival of Greek letters and the ferment of religious reform. Characteristically, the majority of the English reformers eschewed too violent a breach with the old forms, and religious animosity in England never, except during the brief reign of Mary Tudor, reached anything like the violence that ruled in France or Germany or Spain. Sir Thomas More's "Utopia" holds an enlightened plea for tolerance, though his own practice, hampered perhaps by his devotion to the general principles of the Catholic system, was not always on the level of his most daring thought. The "Utopia" is remarkable in other ways as among the first of all Utopias in Western Europe: the reasoned effort to think out—much as Plato had done centuries ago—an ideal Commonwealth where to all men of goodwill might be secured the means of living and the incentive to live well. The old economic problems at the back of the Peasants' Revolt and behind the words of Langland and Wyclif recur in More—"sheep are eating men"—but there is something new and significantly modern in his application of the intellect to their solution and in his forward-looking view. But just as More's own development was cramped by his conservative sympathies, so there was no attempt, for the time, to follow up in practice any of his bold speculations. The Marian persecution and the ensuing struggle against Spain and Rome made the nation reluctant to imperil by any subversive theories the unity it had gained under the rule of Elizabeth, a rule that owing to her statesmanlike tact did not hamper what freedom had, so far, been achieved. The ardour, the readiness to experiment, that we can feel in More did not disappear. Rather they increased, but they passed for the time into other channels, and the chief of these was poetry.

Spenser, the first of the great names, though all come thick together, has always been claimed as the "poet's poet," but he is also, and markedly, a national poet. He is no dramatist, no born story-teller, he has little constructive power, he is often over-sweet and over-long, he cannot touch the springs of tears and of laughter, but he can open the magic casements

into faery lands, and charm us with the song of his own heart, or again with the enthusiasm of patriotic service and, we must add, of patriotic illusion. Montaigne wrote of himself, no man more fully, but his fitting medium was prose, and his attitude to the struggles of his nation was throughout detached. Spenser sings both of his private love and his public hopes. His own wedding-song remains his most perfect achievement, the Epithalamium of revelry and prayer, where the Bacchanal day is holy, and the stars look down on the marriage-night like spirits in Paradise. His Platonic "Hymn to Beauty" is almost as exquisite. But the long rambling unfinished "Faery Queene," though nothing like so perfect, is more distinctive both of the man and of his time. Like his idolized Chaucer he loved scholarship and learnt eagerly from foreigners—the mere form of his chief work shows the stamp of Ariosto, from whom he learnt most, while his early translations prove his study of the French Pléiade—but he has given an unmistakably English character to his rich medley of romantic echoes and classical learning. It is all wrapt in the sunlight and the mist of enthusiasm for gallant adventure, for the glory of the Virgin Queen, for the defence of what seemed a purer religion. The response of his public was ardent and instantaneous. Spenser's qualities at once appealed to what was generous and flattered what was vain in the Elizabethan temper. Half-way between old and new, looking back lovingly to the image of the antique world,

> "When as man's age was in its freshest prime
> And the first blossom of faire virtue bore,"
> (Prol. to Bk. V.)

thrilling with the new-found sense,

> "That of the world least part to us is read;
> And daily now through hardy enterprise
> Many great Regions are discoverëd,"
> (Prol. to Bk. II.)

alive to courtesy and courage everywhere, yet by temperament aristocratic, dismissing the new claim to equality as a mere aping of justice, exulting over the brilliance, the endurance,

and the victory of England's queen till he could see no fault in her at all, he captivated outright the leaders of a nation united once more under an adored descendant of mighty kings, a nation overflowing with vitality, its mettle tested by a struggle for life and death, its imagination fired by new discoveries, its intellect stimulated by a new learning that greedily absorbed the old. What more welcome than the enchantment that showed them so much of their own ambitions transfigured "in lond of Faery"?

Allegory came naturally to Spenser, and allegory is a form of art capable, whatever its dangers, and they are many, of singular successes. It is, moreover, undeniably, a form well suited to the English genius. Spenserian allegory has been potent with men so diverse as Bunyan and Milton, Keats and Shelley. But Spenser's dreamy fantastic chronicle wherein, with Shakespeare, we read

> "descriptions of the fairest wights,
> And beauty making beautiful old rhyme
> In praise of ladies dead and lovely knights,"

knights and ladies succouring distress and achieving self-control—all of it reflects after all only one aspect of the Elizabethan age. It was a passionate age also, very ill to bridle. Spenser's own letter from Ireland furnishes a sardonic commentary on the poet's legends of justice and courtesy. It was the time of the "Plantations," when England first made a determined effort to subdue Ireland to her own laws and customs. Ireland had never united herself and was thus the less able effectively to resist. The disunion gave some real pretext for interference, but nothing can palliate the tyranny with which lands were taken from the Irish people and given over to the clutches of needy Englishmen, mostly younger sons of dominant families and eager themselves to dominate. Soon the country was in a flame of revolt and the cruel oppression did not put out the fire. Yet in the eyes of the chivalrous Spenser the only remedy was that the oppression should be made still more severe. His picture of the starved peasantry, starved with callous indifference

through English policy, is drawn with the vividness of a poet, more vividly indeed than any of his tapestried horrors in the "Faery Queene":

"Out of every corner of the woods and glinnes they came creeping forthe upon theyr handes, for theyr legges could not beare them; they looked like anatomyes of death, they spoke like ghosts crying out of theyr graves; they did eate of the dead carrion, happy were they if they could finde them, yea, and one another soon after, in so much as the very carcasses they spared not to scrape out of the graves."

The picture is often referred to, but it is sometimes forgotten that, although Spenser knew it was of "such wretchedness as any stonye harte would have rued the same," it was not drawn to make his readers shrink from the policy. On the contrary it is the deliberate advice of his Irenæus, "the man of peace," that the system should be extended. The harsh realities of a conqueror's career are seen here naked, stripped of Gloriana's golden trappings.

It is a glimpse of the actual world, but it is only a glimpse. Much more of the typical Elizabethan quality, the "form and pressure" of its eagerness for all experience, good or evil, its delight in free and forceful individualities, often careless of others' freedom, is reflected, as all men know, in its drama, that one achievement of European literature, after the "Divina Commedia," that can compare with the poetry of Greece. The sudden rise of it is to the full as startling as the sudden birth of Spenser's supple and elaborate diction (nurtured on the golden numbers of Ariosto), with which indeed it nearly coincided. English dramatists or would-be dramatists, long limited to a narrow round of conventional miracle-plays and moralities, or clownish farces, had begun by the middle of the century to feel after a style at once grander, wider, and more orderly. But the efforts had been poor, and the models chosen were from the dull Seneca, either direct or derived through the Italians. In less than a generation we find ourselves borne up by Marlowe's flight. It is very suitable that Marlowe's most famous work should be the drama of "Doctor Faustus." The legend of the man who gave his immortal soul for knowledge and beauty and power, to repent

bitterly and in vain, was a fit theme, not only for that wild genius who plunged into vile and glorious excesses and died in a tavern brawl, but also for the age that included the Renaissance and the Reformation.

Marlowe, more perhaps than any poet, has given undying expression to the multiform cravings of the soul,

> "Still climbing after knowledge infinite
> And always moving as the restless spheres,"

thirsting for the beauty that drops from the "immortal flowers of poesy," and not for it only, but for a beauty "which into words no virtue can digest," demanding the whole of the earth for its field of conquest as Tamberlaine demands it. In words and cadences he has all Spenser's sweetness, but he is immeasurably stronger. An iron quality can be felt in his "mighty line," and with it a superb, if fluctuating, dramatic force, to be felt, for example, in the end of his "Faustus" where the great cry of unavailing agony serves only to infuriate the fiends:

> "See where Christ's blood streams in the firmament!
> One drop would save my soul—half a drop: ah, my Christ!
> Ah, rend not my heart for naming of my Christ!"

Born in the same year as Shakespeare, but more precocious in development, Marlowe is the right herald for our supreme poet, and it is good to remember Shakespeare's generous admiration for the "Dead Shepherd." As to Shakespeare himself, the attempt to reach the man behind the pageant of his work is always fascinating and far from impossible. For obviously his nature was as free and generous as it was broad, and his mind, as much a poet's mind as Marlowe's or Spenser's, had not only the imagination of a dramatist, but a steadiness and veracity that prevented it from being hoodwinked by shows or paralysed by dreams. There was never a better example of Plato's dictum that it belongs to the same man to write tragedy and comedy. Sensitiveness and strength are seldom divided in him; sympathy and insight never. That is one reason why we can endure the most heart-breaking of his tragedies. At the worst he makes us feel that man is great.

For he could not and would not, as Dante could and did, separate the Heaven in the cosmos of humanity from the Hell. Chaucer's all-embracing charity revives in him, raised to an incredible power. Even when he draws an Iago, we are surprised at the last into a throb of admiration for the courage in the demi-devil who, we know, will never speak again under whatever torture. So with Shylock. So with Richard III. So with Edmund in "Lear." Even when the whole play, like "Troilus and Cressida," is permeated—I had almost written poisoned—by a sick loathing for the lust and cruelty which masquerade as love and patriotism, he can sustain us by the vision of such lovable characters as Hector and Troilus. They are doomed, but because they have lived we cannot despair. How this effect is gained we cannot say, but certainly never by cloaking the terror in life. A substantial part of the overwhelming impression made by Hamlet comes through showing us how a nature nobly born and unblemished can be shaken to its foundations by the discovery of foulness and treachery and by the demand for ruthless punishment. To other men horrors may be mere names: never to Shakespeare. Yet he can face them with a smile. The over-word of "King Lear" is "Bear free and patient thoughts." Lesser evils he notes with the same unwavering swiftness, the same all-enduring kindliness. He knows quite well the hardness, the craft and the self-deception that go too often with an empire-maker's gallantry and resource: none the less he not only admires Harry the King for his leader's gifts: he can laugh with him delightedly. But he would have laughed also if he had been told that Henry V was his "Ideal Man." And in the end he who faced the spectre of world-destruction in his most tragic play:

> "It will come: humanity must prey on itself
> Like monsters of the deep,"

he who still faced it when he drew Caliban and Trinculo, brute and degenerate, came more and more to find his comfort in the mercy he had loved when he wrote his early comedies. And it is in full accord with this tenderness of nature that from first to last he should be the greatest of all those dramatists

who ever took for theme the sweetness of true love. The last thing Shakespeare could be called is puritanical, but no man ever had a more intense realization than he of love's need for purity and faithfulness.

The best of Shakespeare's contemporaries and immediate successors, though obviously below him, are not unworthy of his companionship. They cannot claim that profound union of the richest poetry woven into the actual stuff of life that puts William in a place apart. But the contagion of genius was alive among the Elizabethans, and starry names come crowding in upon us. Terror and pity perform their purifying work in Webster's "Duchess of Malfi" because they are blent in the right tragic mould with wonder and admiration. Beaumont and Fletcher enhance each other's gifts, of sober strength and warm sensuous imagining. John Ford knows the springs of tenderness. There is a simplicity and a dignity in the death of his Calantha, mistress of herself, her love and her sorrows, that recalls Antigone and Iphigenia:

> "O, my lords, I but deceived your eyes with antic gesture,
> When straight one news came huddling on another
> Of death, and death, and death—still I danced forward.
> They are the silent griefs that crack the heartstrings;
> Let me die smiling."

The likeness, through difference, of the Elizabethan drama to the Athenian, is indeed incessant and notable. A modern scholar [1] has pointed out how the long descriptive passages in Shakespeare, of the Dover Cliff, for example, or the bees working at their honey, serve the same purpose as the lyrics of the classical chorus, at once relieving and broadening the tragic effect by recalling its setting in the larger world. Had the Elizabethans only studied the Greek drama at its best! It is hard to understand why both they, and later on the French, neglected so much of the finest material, and it is impossible not to deplore it. The English might have learnt from the Greeks order, reticence, and the secret of structure,

[1] T. G. Tucker in "Shakspere and Æschylus," a paper read to the Classical Association of Victoria.

and the French might have learnt not to be afraid of homeliness and naturalness in the highest reaches of the "*style noble*."

Yet after all the best scholar among the Elizabethan dramatists remains the least poetical. Ben Jonson has poetry, it is true, but his real power is to be felt in his seizure of grim prosaic types, only lifted into tragedy by the force of will that dignifies their commonplace desires. If it were not for his prodigal barbarity of structure Ben Jonson would suggest a French dramatist of genius rather than an Elizabethan. The cunning, terrible Volpone, fiercely contemptuous of the sycophants who crowd about him for his money, appals us by his unsleeping malignity, his cruel laughter, his more cruel lust, extorts our admiration by his indomitable grin at his own hideous doom, but can never unlock the secret fountains as Timon of Athens does for us when he tells the world that he has built

> "his everlasting mansion
> On the salt verge of the embossèd flood."

The comedy of "Bartholomew Fair," while it abounds in real laughter and vivid portraiture, cannot escape wearying the reader in the end just because it has not a hint of the marvellous to relieve its squalid riot. Ben, in his own preface, seems to allow himself a side-thrust at the element in Shakespeare's "Tempest" which he chose to consider mere monster-making to please the groundlings. But a touch of the magic which can "make Nature afraid" would have made all the difference to his own work.

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE NEW LEARNING IN ENGLAND: FRANCIS BACON

AS Elizabethan England passed into Jacobean, and the sixteenth century led on to the seventeenth, two other achievements claim our attention: the splendid development of English prose and the birth of modern science in Europe.

The range of the prose writers is enormous. Their power is shown alike in comedies, narratives, sermons, essays, translations, above all in the translation of the Bible. Here they attain their loftiest, and the sustained nobility of the language is a marvellous instance of what may be accomplished by a number of minds, sensitive and able, working together without envy or private ambition on a book known and reverenced as beautiful and divine. The Authorized Version was long in the making and there were many makers: Purvey and Wycliffe in the fourteenth century, Tyndale and Miles Coverdale in the sixteenth, and the group that completed the Authorized Version under James I. Its influence on the literature and imagination of England has been at least as great as on her religion, and it will be an evil day for English prose if the Bible ceases, and some think it has already ceased, to be a household book for the common people.

The name of Francis Bacon used to be cited as pre-eminent in the advance towards modern science. But it is now generally recognized that his mind, though sagacious, was far from being in the first rank. He felt, it was true, the enthusiasm for knowledge and discovery that stirred his age, and also the impulse to free criticism; he gave them pungent and glowing expression, he was keenly aware of the need for steady

experimental labour, "slow-paced practice and trial," free from those idols of the tribe, the cave, the market, and the theatre, prejudices common to the race, or peculiar to the person, or bred of talk and haphazard theory.

He quotes with zest the ancient apologue of the wise man who was shown by a miracle-monger the votive tablets of those who had prayed to Neptune and been preserved from shipwreck. "Yea," said the sage, "but where are they painted that were drowned?"[1] In more formal language: "The first work of true induction," Bacon writes, "is the rejection or exclusion of the several natures which are not found in some instance where the given nature is present, or are found in some instance where the given nature is absent."[2] It is, in essentials, Mill's "Method of Agreement and Difference." Moreover, while insisting on the test of thorough observation, Bacon insisted also that science is more than observation; experiment and theory must go hand-in-hand if causes are ever to be discovered. "Philosophy neither relies solely or chiefly on the powers of the mind, nor does it take the matter which it gathers from natural history and mechanical experiments and lay it up in the memory whole, as it finds it; but lays it up in the understanding altered and digested. Therefore from a closer and purer league between these two faculties, the experimental and the rational (such as has never yet been made) much may be hoped."

At the same time we must admit that Bacon's own detailed suggestions for research, of which he was so proud, were of scant value, while he himself never contributed to a single great discovery nor conducted a single fruitful experiment, and this too at a time when momentous advances were being made in physiology, astronomy, physics, and mathematics. He scouted the Copernican theory, and we can easily understand Harvey's curt summing up of his high pretensions: "He writes on philosophy like a Lord Chancellor." Or, we might add, a journalist of genius, just enough ahead of public opinion to lead it forward amid

[1] "De Augmentis," Bk. V., tr. by Ellis and Spedding.
[2] "Novum Organon," Bk. 2, § xvi.

universal applause. But let us add in fairness that such a power is never to be despised. And Bacon is never so truly eloquent as when urging the nobleness of knowledge in itself and in its uses.

"The empire of man over things depends wholly on the arts and sciences. For we cannot command Nature except by obeying her. . . .

"And yet (to speak the whole truth) as the uses of light are infinite, enabling us to walk, to ply our arts, to read, to recognize one another; and nevertheless the very beholding of the light is itself a more excellent and a fairer thing than all the uses of it; so assuredly the very contemplation of things, as they are, without superstition or imposture, error or confusion, is in itself more worthy than all the fruit of inventions." (Nov. Org. Aphorism 129.)

Bacon's attack on Aristotle was often ignorant, but his assault on the lazy subservience to Aristotle was always stimulating. The schoolmen had been content to take words for things, had satisfied themselves with false traditions and hasty generalizations, looking idly into the shop-window of Nature instead of going boldly into her warehouse and searching for themselves. "Let men be assured that the fond opinion that they have already acquired enough, is a principal reason that they have acquired so little." ("Advancement of Learning.") He dangles, it is true, rather too often the bait of a low utilitarianism: his "New Atlantis," charming as it is, suggests a Utopia of shopkeepers; and his conception of purpose in the universe is on no higher level. "The vegetables and animals of all kinds either afford us matter for houses, habitations, clothing, food, physic, or tend to ease, or delight, or support, or refresh us; so that everything in nature seems made not for itself, but for man."

Yet, with whatever drawbacks, Bacon did spread and clarify the desire for research and experiment, although it was other men who had begun and who continued the actual work of discovery and marked out the most hopeful paths to follow.

CHAPTER XXIX

THE AWAKENING IN SCIENCE

(F. S. Marvin)

IT has been recently pointed out by a writer [1] on the history of science that 1543 is a notable year. It saw the publication both of the "De Revolutionibus Orbium Celestium" by Copernicus the Pole, and of the "De Corporis Humani Fabrica" by Vesalius the Belgian. It is useful to note such epoch-marking dates and especially convenient when two great men publish their "Opera Magna" in the same year. But when we come to look into the details we always find that some one has anticipated them, somewhere and in part, and that the greatest merit of the great man is seeing some old half-apprehended truth in fuller light and with new connections, making, in fact, a fresh synthesis.

So it is with the re-founders of science in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. They proclaimed—and rightly—the need of an experimental method. It was experiment which decided Galileo and laid the foundation of modern mechanics. Yet the appeal to experiment was no new thing. Dante has a famous passage [2] in its praise. Roger Bacon extols it, and Aristotle, against whom Bacon invoked it, himself made experiments.

How does it happen, then, that sometimes the experiment or the brilliant idea remains for a long time fruitless, while

[1] Dr. Singer, "Studies in the History and Method of Science" (Clarendon Press), Vols. I and II. See also "The Legacy of Greece" (Clarendon Press).

[2] Paradiso, II. 95.

sometimes, as with the circle and successors of Galileo, the seed falls on good ground and springs up and bears fruit immediately and abundantly? The reason is much the same as in the parable. The ground is fit in one case and not in the other. For the springing-up of modern science the soil began to be prepared by the Arabs; it was stirred again by the Crusaders and became ready in the thirteenth century; it was delayed by the feudal disorders of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries and by the distrust of the clerical leaders; it began to bear its crop in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

In other words, science is a social thing and its advance depends even more upon the whole state of society than upon the individuals in whose minds the new ideas first appear.

In the ancient world the birth of science took place, six centuries before the Christian era, among the Ionian Greeks on the west coast of Asia Minor. They had established there flourishing cities and had grown rich by commerce. Quick wits and a habit of travel had enabled them to extract hints from the priesthoods of Babylon and Egypt, who had stored up astronomical and other observations. The Greeks transmuted these into science, and are the first of mankind about whom we can predicate scientific thought. It related in the first place to mathematics, and especially geometry, with certain references to astronomy. Then a little later came the beginnings of scientific medicine and biology.

Now for some little time before the thirteenth century A.D. and the appeal of Roger Bacon events had been happening in the West which recalled these ancient times and promised a similar sequel. East and West had again come into contact. This time the Arabs played the part of Eastern sages and the Italians represented the Greeks. And the circumstances of the time were in many respects alike. In each case a new spirit of inquiry was beginning to stir in a world still largely dominated by theological beliefs and organization. In each case the area of free inquiry was extended by commerce and travel. And the rise of self-governing political communities hastened the process. As in Greece, so in Italy,

thought flourished in cities like Florence and Venice, Pisa and Genoa, Padua and Bologna, which had an intense political life of their own. The physical world was being enlarged by the Eastern journeys of men like Marco Polo, who explored the high and distant lands of Central Asia. The world of thought was extended by the renewed study of ancient authors—classics of Greece and Rome—who had thought and written and thrived outside the limits of the cloister, before, in fact, the ideal of the cloister had arisen in men's minds.

It is clear that when we thus envisage scientific thought as one function of a developing social life, we cannot sharply define its advent and say, "Here science begins: before it there was no science." But we can see how, just before the thirteenth century, there was so much movement in the air that the appearance of an anticipating genius such as Roger Bacon was not quite miraculous. It has been already stated that just before his day the scientific works of Aristotle had begun to reach the West, and the "Almagest" of Ptolemy, the storehouse of ancient astronomy, had been translated into Latin. Side by side with the revival of mathematical and astronomical science appeared the science of medicine, which had its first Western home at the University of Salerno.

In each case the new school of thinkers first turned to what had been done by the earlier founders. In astronomy Ptolemy and his predecessors lived again, and in philosophy Aristotle; while in biology and medicine Galen, who had enjoyed a more unbroken sway than any other Greek, was re-examined with more impartial eyes.

But, as already noticed, feudal conflicts and clerical timidity hampered the free growth of thought. The Church, though far from wholly impervious to the new influences, clung to the enforcement of belief on grounds of supernatural truth, not to be discovered by observation of the world around and the use of the individual reason, nor advancing, as the Greeks had taught, whither the argument led the mind. It is not till well after the Reformation that we meet the full dawn of modern experiment. Yet the two centuries and a half

which passed between the death of Roger Bacon and the date 1543, which we have suggested for the birth-year of modern science, are marked by a real, if intermittent, approach towards scientific light. The Renaissance was not, as it has sometimes been represented, a sudden revelation.

It was a gradual rediscovery of the work of ancient thinkers and writers, especially of Greek writers, coupled with the gradual free use of the intellect in criticizing traditional ideas and opening itself to the real world. We cannot sharply distinguish the dates nor the different aspects of this awakening.

Of these humanists, who had both interest in and influence on science, Toscanelli, the Italian, and the German Nicolas of Cues, deserve high praise. Toscanelli had set up a gnomon in the cathedral at Florence which measured the height of the sun to a second. He also made a famous map, probably used by Columbus, and was the first to engrave maps on copper. Early in the fifteenth century his friend and pupil, Nicolas, went farther, and by his study of the ancient authors became a living link between old and new. Mathematics took a considerable place in his thought and he anticipated Galileo as well as Copernicus in many of his views, especially on the movement of the earth. By the end of the century we meet the amazing achievements of Leonardo da Vinci, perhaps the most gifted man of the whole Renaissance. If any one person were to be studied as exhibiting in all its richness and versatility the new spirit of free inquiry, eagerness and enjoyment of nature which mark that age, it might well be he. Ingenious inventor, unwearied questioner and observer, accomplished artist, he strewed the ground with such a profusion of pearls that many of them escaped notice till a later age. He anticipated modern mechanics with his instruments, modern geology with his views on fossils, modern anatomy with his exquisite drawings of human and animal forms, and he showed throughout the true scientific spirit by carefully testing and measuring every phenomenon which occurred to him and was capable of measurement.

But, like many universal geniuses, he did not become a

founder. He was too many-sided to create a school in any one branch and attained an isolated and shining eminence rather than a step in the ascending scale of knowledge.

That position is held by his younger contemporary, Copernicus the Pole, whose work on the movement of the heavenly bodies, though composed many years before, was only published after his death, in 1543, just under a century since the birth of Leonardo. His story is typical of the science of the Renaissance. He began with the Ptolemaic system of celestial spheres revolving round the central earth. He found this open to many difficulties and encumbered with many complexities. He went farther among the Greeks themselves and found that other hypotheses had been put forward by earlier thinkers than Ptolemy. The Pythagoreans had taught the doctrine of a central fire which warmed and enlightened all the heavenly bodies. Aristarchus of Samos, one of the Alexandrian School in the third century B.C., had advanced to a more accurate conception of the celestial order and made, by a strictly scientific method, the first approximation to the relative size and distance of the sun and moon. He also held the view that the earth revolves and that the sun and the fixed stars are motionless. It was on this hypothesis that Copernicus fixed and he saw its advantage in simplicity over the Ptolemaic system. He found, so he tells us, a first suggestion of the theory in the work of Martianus Capella, who wrote a sort of encyclopædia of knowledge in the sixth century A.D. Martianus taught that Venus and Mercury revolve round the sun. Copernicus extended this doctrine to the other planets and drew in his book a diagram of all the planets then known, revolving in circles, at increasing distances round the sun, which is the centre of the universe.

The whole story of the filiation of the doctrine, which includes more steps than we have space to mention, is of high value and interest as an example of the continuity of scientific thought. But there seems to be no intermediate stage between Martianus Capella and Copernicus, and Martianus, though right in the case of Mercury and Venus, does not

apply his truth generally, and says explicitly that the earth is the centre of the universe.

Copernicus, though rightly regarded as the pioneer of modern astronomy, had not the knowledge or the power, which Kepler was able to wield seventy years later with the aid of the telescope, to calculate the correct orbits and motions of the planets. He tried to simplify, and he tried to make the " scientific law " fit better to, or better express, the observed facts. This is the constant aim of the scientific inquirer, and Copernicus gives us one of the two most influential examples of it ; Darwin three hundred years later gives the other. In each case the first hypothesis was subject to a long and searching examination by other workers, and in each case large corrections were subsequently made which did not, however, invalidate the general truth of the original assumption.

It was an obvious simplification to assume that the earth revolved on its axis once in every twenty-four hours rather than that the whole multitude of heavenly bodies revolved round it, with an additional movement of the opposite kind to account for the precession of the equinoxes. The gravest error of Copernicus lay in representing the orbits of the planets as circles, because the circle is the simplest and most perfect figure. Herein lay a " metaphysical " preconception, or *idée fixe*, which the want of adequate instruments prevented him from correcting.

His modest avowal of a mere hypothesis prevented the immediate outbreak of the storm which raged round the head of Galileo. More than seventy years passed before his work was put on the Index in 1616, when Galileo had made the question burning and crucial.

Luther expressed the prejudice of the popular, and still more of the traditionally religious mind, when he said, " The fool would turn Astronomy upside down. Holy Writ tells us that Joshua bade the sun stand still and not the earth." There was the hitch, an unreasoning attachment to an accepted text, and, though we may pardon Luther as in this matter an ordinary member of the unthinking public, we may

question whether the revolution in scientific thought which he opposed and despised was not really greater than that which he carried out in the domain of religious doctrine. Melanchthon, who had a mind more cultivated for the apprehension of such discussions, saw the importance of the new teaching more clearly, and was still more active in his opposition. He held the Copernican heliocentric view to be so godless that it ought to be suppressed. The Bible was to be the final authority in questions of science as well as of conduct. But for the Protestants the bulwark against innovation was far less easy to defend than for the Catholics. If a book, or rather a collection of books, of various dates and different authorship, were to be the standard, who was to interpret the standard itself? Every man who read it might interpret it differently. For the Catholic there was only the one authoritative interpretation, the whole body of the Church, speaking for fifteen hundred years through the mouth of its chief.

But in the case of the Copernican doctrine even the unbroken tradition of the Church at last gave way. The decree of 1616 condemning his work fell gradually into disuse and oblivion, and was in 1822 finally withdrawn.

We noticed the year 1543 as a critical date both for cosmical and biological science, the year of Copernicus' book and of Vesalius' "De Corporis Humani Fabrica." It was a birth-year of new interest and new mental activity. But for the maturity of both branches of science we have to wait for some time longer, and in biology until nearly our own day. It is important to master this fact because, though the growth of scientific knowledge is similar throughout and due throughout to the operation of an active mind upon its surrounding phenomena, yet the different branches of science have come to maturity in a different order, and by that very order have revealed their interconnection and a great deal of their nature. The crisis in cosmical science, of which the work of Copernicus was a leading step, came in the seventeenth century, and we shall study it in a later chapter. By that time a mechanically coherent scheme of the physical order of the universe was reached to which later thought has constantly added amplifi-

cations and corrections, but not revolution. But the corresponding crisis in the sciences of life does not come till the nineteenth century, when the doctrine of evolution plays somewhat the same part in transforming our outlook which the Copernican theory, elaborated by Galileo and Newton, played in the physical world in the seventeenth.

In the four centuries from the end of the twelfth to the end of the sixteenth, from the crusades and the rise of the universities to the work of Galileo, seeds of all kinds were being sown, new observations of all sorts were being made, hitherto unknown facts from all quarters were coming into ken, which bore their fruits gradually and built up a new order of life and thought of which we are even yet only beginning to discern the clear outlines. Art played its part in this awakening life as well as scientific observation ; travel was as fruitful as experiment. During the years in which Copernicus was developing his theory, explorers East and West were adding to European knowledge new lands, new plants, new animals. Cabot first landed on the North American continent in 1497, when Copernicus was twenty-four years old. In 1500, when Cabral landed on the shores of Brazil, Copernicus began teaching mathematics and making astronomical observations at Bologna and at Rome. The explorations of Central and Southern America by Cortez and Pizarro were going on while Copernicus was exploring the heavens for new truth there. And the widening of the world to the East which accompanied this was as extensive and of very similar import. The Mediterranean Sea, which had been the centre of the earlier culture and the first world-organization of the Greeks and Romans, now became the centre of a far wider influence destined in the nineteenth century to encircle the globe.

In the early stages of the sciences of life, just coming to the birth from an unfettered study of the Greek pioneers, Art played at first a considerable part in aiding strictly scientific observation and experiment. Men began to take delight in picturing truly not only the plants and other objects described by the ancients, but what they could see and handle themselves, and the explorers were daily adding to their wealth.

Albrecht Dürer, whose life falls within that of Copernicus, represents altogether 180 different plants and animals in his pictures, and he took particular pleasure in adding them as subsidiary to the main subject. Others did the same on a larger scale. Gesner, born at Zurich in 1516, who studied in Strasbourg and Paris, gives us 1,500 drawings of plants, the first with accurate detail of flower and fruit. This first descriptive stage was essential before classification could be attempted, and classification had to precede the scientific study of the law of growth.

Anatomy, the foundation of biology, was at the same time passing through a similar stage. Leonardo's anatomical drawings we have already mentioned. Vesalius' own book, " De Corporis Humani Fabrica," is splendidly illustrated and the drawings are attributed to a pupil of Titian's. But more than draughtsmanship was needed : dissection was imperative, dissection, moreover, aided by the microscope, which was being developed, side by side with the telescope, in the early seventeenth century.

The religious prejudice of the time against mutilating a dead body was still so strong that the dissectors had to be prepared for adventure, contrivance and perseverance not inferior to that of the travellers who explored the Spanish main. Vesalius, as a young man, in order to secure a human subject for dissection, was driven, at the risk of his own life, to carry off the body of a criminal hung on the gallows.

It will be noticed that the work on biology at this stage, being of the descriptive and classificatory kind, is preliminary to scientific law in the stricter sense. Physical science at the hands of Copernicus, Galileo, and Kepler attained a degree of rational co-ordination which the science of life did not reach till our own time, if indeed it has reached it now. But there is one link between the two main branches of science at this time which is full of interest, and should be mentioned before we turn to Galileo, the greatest of the forerunners. Galileo's birth followed the death of Copernicus after nineteen years. He was teaching mathematics and physics in Padua from

1592 to 1610 and attracting thousands from every part of Europe. Among these was an Englishman called Harvey, who studied in Padua from 1598 to 1602. Harvey had gone to Padua to study the science of medicine, which had made great strides in Italy and was in advance there over the rest of the world, thanks to Vesalius and his school. Vesalius himself had worked and taught in Padua. There, between the two converging influences—a true anatomy which studied the actual build and functioning of the body and a new mechanical conception of motion and force—Harvey first conceived the first mechanical law introduced into biology. He began to expound it at the College of Physicians after 1616 and it was published as " The Circulation of the Blood " in 1628.

The coincidence of Galileo and Harvey is as noteworthy as that of Copernicus and Vesalius and more significant. There was real connection between the former, but while Harvey's discovery had to wait for the development of chemistry to unfold its full meaning, Galileo's at once became the starting point of the mechanical ideal of the material universe which is the leading feature of seventeenth century science. His mind was the strongest influence in the awakening. It should be remembered that Galileo himself had begun by the study of medicine and that he was of the Renaissance giants, a man versed like Leonardo in art and study of all kinds, mechanician, painter, musician, as well as a scientific mind of unexampled subtlety and persistence. He surpassed Leonardo, however, and succeeded greatly in one direction by having the wisdom early to discern where his proper work lay and where the most needed advance in science was to be made. He was eighteen when he began to attend lectures on medicine at Pisa. At twenty-two he received his first lesson in Euclid and soon passed on, burning with interest and enthusiasm, to Archimedes. The ancient thinkers, in his as in so many other cases, supplied the stimulus which set his mind to work on its own lines. They revealed to him the first fresh appreciation of the fundamental laws of geometry which underlie all our accurate thinking. He quickly grasped the conclusions

of the pioneers and went on to conquer along the road which they had opened.

His first advance on Archimedes was the construction of a balance to solve more simply the problem of the Crown of gold alloyed with silver. In this, as later in the construction of the telescope and the microscope, he showed the value of great manual dexterity wedded to a powerful mind. Like so many of the greatest men of science, he had wonderful hands. Archimedes had discovered the principles of the lever and of specific gravity—the foundations of Statics. Galileo went on immediately to lay the foundations of dynamics. In 1588 he wrote, inspired by Archimedes, a treatise on "The Centre of Gravity in Solids." The next year he was appointed Professor of Mathematics in Pisa and began his series of researches on motion.

The "book philosophers" who blindly followed the traditional interpretation of certain stray and rather obscure passages in Aristotle maintained that bodies fall to the earth in times inversely proportional to their weight. A weight of ten pounds would fall in a tenth of the time that one pound would take. Galileo put the matter to a simple test. He let fall the two weights from the top of the leaning Tower of Pisa and settled the question in his sense. This experiment, however, the best known and most easily intelligible of all he tried, was but a small part of the mass of ingenious tests he applied to ascertain the simple fundamental laws of force and motion. He succeeded in establishing them. He showed that the spaces traversed by bodies uniformly accelerated, e.g. in falling, are to one another as the squares of the time; that the time occupied in any portion of the fall is equal to that which would be taken by a body moving throughout that space with half its velocity at the end; that the spaces in each successive interval are to one another as the series of odd numbers. He thus founded the science of dynamics which, after Kepler's work on the planets, was used within a hundred years by Newton to bring into one synthesis the motion of the earth and all the heavenly bodies. Later researches, connected with the name of Einstein, carry the

synthesis even farther, linking up inertia with gravitation.

Galileo himself suspected the analogy which Newton demonstrated, between the power holding the moon near the earth and the attractive power of the earth over bodies at its surface. What he observed, through his newly invented telescope, of the motions of Jupiter's satellites confirmed him in the belief that there was a common law throughout. But he did not attain to its statement. To his mind the motions which he detected in Jupiter's system, in the phases of Venus, in Saturn and his rings were chiefly and insistently interesting as confirmations of the Copernican theory. The earth and all the planets moved round the sun.

In 1592 he had left Pisa for Padua, where most of his astronomical work was done. In 1610 he went to Florence, full of his new conviction, and in 1611 he visited Rome, where he freely advocated the new conception of the universe. Giordano Bruno had been burnt there ten years before, for boldly following out a similar line of thought. From that time till his death he knew no peace. The fear and opposition which had been slumbering since the new truth was first suggested by Copernicus long before, now broke out in full force. In spite of his personal friendship with the Pope, he was finally condemned in 1633 and forced to read and sign a written abjuration of the Copernican doctrines. Thereafter he lived in retirement near Florence till his death in 1642, active in mind though in his last few years blind. Visitors sought him out from all parts of Europe, among them our own Milton, one day himself to be blind, famous, and set aside.

His closing years were illumined by his greatest book, the "Dialogues on the Two Sciences of Mechanics and Motion," published four years before his death in Holland, the home of freedom to many bold thinkers in this and later years. But his golden age was in Padua, where in the first decade of the seventeenth century "his house was not only a school to which flocked students, Italians, and foreigners from every country, but, more than this, a laboratory where his marvellous mechanical talent knew how to devise ever new

expedients. It was an academy in the true sense of the word where the gravest problems in physics, in mechanics, in astronomy, and in mathematics, were discussed with perfect freedom, and where it was possible to submit the deductions of reason to the salutary test of experiment, and the results of experiments, in their turn, to reasoning and calculation." [1]

One's mind goes back to the old debates of the Greek philosophers in Ionia, in Magna Græcia and in Athens. There had been nothing like this in the western world since, and now, when the free-inquiring mind began to work again, we see it aided by a new spirit and a new apparatus of experiment. An active and subtle mind, questioning every received opinion, following out any suggested harmonious explanation of the facts, a constant readiness to fight and demonstrate the truth to ignorant and often prejudiced opponents, a steadfast adherence to great conclusions once grasped and the adding to them of fresh illuminating and relevant observations; these were the leading features of the most influential founder of modern science, a master of re-awakening thought in Europe. He describes his own gifts when he tells us that, "Ignorance has been the best teacher I have ever had, since, in order to be able to demonstrate to my opponents the truths of my conclusions, I have been forced to prove them by a variety of experiments, though to satisfy myself alone I have never felt it necessary to make many."

Looking back upon him now, as the great founder and intermediary between the mathematical science of the ancient world and the physics of the modern, we shall admire him more the more we study him. He is true to the best in both worlds. He bent himself from the first to trace the mathematical truths involved in the facts of motion, and by a true intuition he turned first to those of which the laws could be most easily approached and most surely established. But though convinced that the language of the physical universe is mathematics, and that we must first understand the language before we can read the book, he yet never allows a pre-conception of the meaning to divert his mind from the accurate observa-

[1] Favaro, "Galileo e lo studio di Padova."

tion of the fact. He believed that the key of physical science was mathematics, but mathematical research must be itself controlled by observation of Nature. In this attitude he stands more perfectly than any other man as the representative of modern science, strained later, as we shall see, in one direction by Descartes and his school, brought back in our own day nearer to its true balance by the doctrine of relativity.

CHAPTER XXX

THE STRUGGLES FOR LIBERTY IN GERMANY AND ENGLAND: ENGLISH THOUGHT IN RELIGION AND POLITICS

IT is to be noted that in the work just described, the invaluable pioneer work of modern science, Germany, with the significant exception of Kepler (1571–1630), plays but a negligible part. The reason is not far to seek. During the first half of the seventeenth century unity, the second factor, after liberty, requisite for advanced culture, was scarcely to be found on German soil. The terrible Thirty Years' War (1618–1648), waged not only with the fury of partisan bigotry and sheer selfishness, but also, and largely, by foreign and greedy mercenaries, crippled the unfortunate land for nearly three generations. The seventeenth century is a barren time for German culture. And obviously this was not due to lack of ability in the people. Before and after that devastating strife Germany has shown her creative power, and there is no change of race or creed to account for the contrast. It is a tragic instance of the truth in Bacon's warning that under the din of arms "first the laws are silent and not heard, and then men return to their own depraved natures, whence cultivated lands and cities soon become desolate and waste. And if the disorder continues, learning and philosophy is infallibly torn to pieces: so that only some scattered fragments thereof can afterwards be found, up and down in a few places, like planks after a shipwreck." ("On the Interpretation of Fables.")

The sixteenth century had seen in Germany, as elsewhere, the setting-up of an unstable equilibrium in religion and

politics. This now broke down altogether. The fervour of Luther, broad and genial however rough, was replaced among those who should have been the leaders either by indifference or by doctrinaire fanaticism, while the Catholic League, led by the Jesuits, sharpened the opposition from the side of the Old Faith. Moreover, the ancient struggle revived between the semi-independent princedoms and the Imperial ambition, now embodied in the Austrian House of Hapsburg. Finally the turmoil was complicated by racial antipathy and foreign intervention.

The German Hapsburgs were Catholic, and the outbreak was precipitated by a revolt in Bohemian Prague against the destruction of Protestant Churches at which the Emperor was thought to have connived. The Imperial Representatives were hurled from the windows of the Castle by the infuriated Bohemians, a fitting signal for the savage campaign. Frederick, the Calvinist elector of the Palatinate (son-in-law of James I), accepted the crown of Bohemia, only to be signally overthrown. Tilly, the Emperor's able general, trampled on the country, and as the war spread Wallenstein, himself a Bohemian and once a Protestant, added his genius to the devastating power of the Imperial mercenaries. The cause of Protestantism seemed well-nigh lost. But the Catholic princes were jealous of imperial dominance ; Wallenstein was suspected, not it seems unjustly, of grasping at supreme power ; the wily Richelieu, minister of Louis XIII, fomented the suspicion in order to check the power of Austria ; and suddenly from Sweden across the Baltic appeared the "Lion of the North," the chivalrous Gustavus Adolphus, the one champion of religion to take arms, who, in the chaotic struggle, was unquestionably sincere. He met and defeated both Tilly and Wallenstein, but was killed himself in the battle with Wallenstein.

Once more German Protestantism ran the utmost risk, but again Richelieu intervened, always alert to prevent a strong military empire threatening the French frontier. He supported the stricken Protestants, professed Catholic though he was, against Austria's ally, Spain, and so came definitely

into the field. Turenne and Condé won renown and terror for the French arms, and when the war finally ended with the Peace of Westphalia in 1648, France acquired almost the whole of Alsace and had her claim recognized to the border bishoprics of Metz, Toul, and Verdun.

It was an important stage in the secular duel between France and Germany, and led directly to the aggressive designs of Louis XIV. Prostrate Germany was a tempting prey.

In religion, so far as treaties could go, matters went back to the Peace of Augsburg. The citizen had to comply with the creed of his State. But he could leave his State, and Germany was now more than ever divided into little States. Moreover, by the end of the seventeenth century, Europe in general was beginning to see the cruelty and folly of religious persecution. The Utopian conviction " that it is in no man's power to believe what he list " was gradually sinking into men's minds.

While the Thirty Years' War was ravaging Germany, England was entering on her own internal struggle. The Tudor equilibrium was shattered under Charles I, and the eleven years of the great experiment in a Commonwealth (1649–1660) follow immediately on the Peace of Westphalia. As in Germany, religion and politics interlock in the struggle. But, except in Ireland, where intolerance, oppression and race hatred worked fatal havoc, the English leaders never entirely lost sight of reason and humanity, and certain solid gains were in the end achieved, and, after the interlude of the Restoration, consolidated. It is best, perhaps, to begin with the political side. The principle of responsible government, by which the head of the State is bound to consult the nation through its chosen representatives, was in essence vindicated. It was a notable triumph, and England alone, with the exception of Holland, from whom she was later to receive a constitutional king, stood victoriously for the idea at a time when the other great countries of Europe were threatened either with despotism or anarchy. The struggle was at bottom another form of the inveterate conflict between Liberty and

Order. And the difficulties can be gauged by the perplexities that dogged the ablest of our leaders. It was the tragedy of Cromwell's life that he, a true lover of liberty, was driven further and further to work against it because he foresaw that if the nation was allowed to have its way it would both reject the Puritanism that to him was the gospel of God, and surrender to Stuart absolutism. Historians have long ago given up the vulgar misconception that personal ambition drove him forward. As he said himself, it was his dearest wish that all the Lord's people could be prophets. But if they refused, if the bulk of them went a-whoring after strange gods, it was for him and his army behind him to succour the remnant of the Lord's people. The nation, however, had only raised an army to avoid being governed by a ruler who would not submit to its control. It was nowise prepared to allow Cromwell what it had refused Charles, and Cromwell had no right to demand it. His was the tragic mistake of forcing a nation to be free before it desired freedom, and the freedom was destroyed by the force.

In Ireland he went further still, and it is impossible to read without a shudder his pitiless account of how priests were "knocked on the head" and the inhabitants of Drogheda and Wexford put to the sword. The evil tradition of "conquering" the Irish, "these murderous Irish," as Milton, his admirer, calls them, "the enemies of God and mankind," it was this that appears to have darkened his insight, for in England he never dreamed of such excesses, and Milton could confidently appeal to him to save "free conscience" from the tyranny of the new Presbyter who was but old Priest writ large.

As far as England is concerned, it may well be pleaded in Cromwell's defence that the nation had not yet worked out any scheme to combine a clear expression of the people's will with the swift coherent execution only possible to a single man or a small group of like-minded men. Doubtless this goal has never yet been reached, but there have been closer approximations than seemed possible then. Cromwell's own high-souled failure led to fruitful searchings

of heart among friends and opponents alike. It is significant that Harrington's "Oceana," one of the most practical Utopias ever penned, was written by a man who had deep and warm sympathies for both sides. The book had a lasting influence on the best thought of the period and later was appreciated to good purpose in America, especially as regards the famous separation of the executive and deliberative functions, government in Harrington's view having three parts, "the senate proposing, the people resolving, the magistracy executing." [1] Harrington is indeed sympathetic enough to have glimpses of a truth not yet generally accepted, namely, that sovereignty is not after all a thing essentially one and indivisible but a structure achieved and supported by co-operation. And if his book, like every other, does not solve its problems, at least it shows the English political genius in travail of a great idea. In fact the idea carried him beyond the bounds of politics in the narrow sense. He revived More's attack on excessive wealth and pressed it with greater seriousness than More, suggesting instead of an impossible communism the eminently practical plan of limiting estates in land. He stands half-way here between Cromwell and the Levellers.

Milton, without going into such detail as Harrington, scrupled, it is clear, at Cromwell's despotic rule. And yet Milton also could be driven counter to his own love of liberty. No one is more outspoken than he in attacking the extravagances of divine right. Here the best of the classic tradition lives again in the scholar and patriot. He appeals to the proud humility of Euripides' monarch, "I rule not my people by tyranny as if they were barbarians but am myself liable, if I do unjustly, to suffer justly." He cites the dictum we have already quoted from Theodosius the Younger that "on the authority of law the authority of a prince depends." "How can any king in Europe maintain and write himself accountable to none but God, when emperors in their own imperial statutes have written and decreed themselves accountable to law?" ("Tenure of Kings and Magistrates.")

"And surely they that shall boast, as we do, to be a free

[1] G. P. Gooch, "English Political Thought from Bacon to Halifax."

nation, and not have in themselves the power to remove or to abolish any governor supreme, or subordinate, with the government itself upon urgent cause, may please their fancy with a ridiculous and painted freedom, fit to cozen babies; but we are indeed under tyranny and servitude in wanting that power, which is the root and source of all liberty, to dispose and economize in the land which God hath given them, as masters of family in their own house and free inheritance." (ibid.)

Yet the same Milton, when faced with the bitter fact that the nation was hankering for the Stuarts, ready " to fall back, or rather creep back so poorly, as it seems the multitude would, to their once abjured and detested thraldom of Kingship," could urge with equal fervour that they should be placed by force, " the less number " having the right for liberty's sake to compel the greater, under the control of a Grand Council, elected indeed, but practically irremovable. There was another alternative that Milton himself had all but indicated; to let the people have their way, trusting in the power of truth at last to bring them round. " Though all the winds of doctrine were let loose to play upon the earth, so truth be in the field, we do injuriously by licensing and prohibiting to misdoubt her strength. Let her and falsehood grapple: who ever knew truth put to the worse in a fair and open encounter? " (" Areopagitica.")

There lies the hope for any solution of the conflict between liberty and law. But the conflict may go deep, and no one was better calculated to feel the depth of it than a Puritan who was also a poet. Puritanism at once appealed to the individual conscience, bidding it judge freely for itself beyond all visible signs, ceremonies, or rulers, and stood for the conviction that there was an absolute law beyond the individual's caprice. That law it conceived as laid down fully by the Hebrew Scriptures, and in the last resort inscrutable to Man. The impress of this faith can be felt all through " Paradise Lost," the theme of which is precisely the battle of unchartered Liberty and supreme Law, a battle conceived with indescribable grandeur as the cosmic struggle which it is.

The dramatic power in the character of Satan would alone be proof enough of Milton's sympathy with the principle of personal freedom, a Spirit, however degraded, once "Inhabitant of Heaven and heavenly-born," though plunged because of sheer pride, envy, "deep malice and disdain," "into the gloom of Tartarus profound," forced to seek the help of Chaos and say with him:

> "Havoc, and spoil, and ruin, are my gain."
> (Par. Lost, v.)

The fall of Lucifer and following that the fall of Man are conceived as essentially tragic because they mean the waste of a thing essentially glorious. "Will and Reason (Reason also is Choice)" are "useless and vain" without freedom. (Bk. iii.) And yet freedom implies the power of choosing wrong and hence the possibility of all "vice and obliquity against the rule of law."

Milton saw in that misuse the central tragedy of the universe, working in "Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues, Powers," drawing men from the unashamed delights of innocence into insensate passion disguised as a "dauntless virtue"

> "Deterred not from achieving what might lead
> To happier life, knowledge of good and evil."
> (ix. 690).

It is a profound conception, the richer through the poet's understanding (that we can see for example in "Comus") of the strong lure in many-sided and unrestrained experience. And it flowered into the most majestic of English poetries. But the sublime effect can be marred and the poetry frozen by the stiff conception of arbitrary decrees, the fiats of an irresponsible God whom all created beings must obey without question, though again even there the greatness in Milton's religious and poetic passion can dignify the argument.

> "Shalt thou give law to God? shalt thou dispute
> With Him the points of liberty, who made
> Thee what thou art, and formed the Powers of Heaven
> Such as He pleased and circumscribed their being?"
> (v. 822).

Yet, after all, exactly what Milton needed to fulfil his genius, touch us to tears, and swing us up to heights that are truly tragic was some vast thought that would exhibit Jehovah's Law as the deepest fulfilment of what Lucifer himself approved. But that is asking much—and of a kind that could scarcely be expected of Milton's temperament. With all his nobility there was a strain of hardness in him that checked his range. He had not that catholic hope in the basis of man's thought and man's desire that could make Goethe, an inferior poet but a broader nature, conceive his Mephistopheles, the asserter of the Self, as great enough to goad Man forward, even while he tempts him to sin.

If Milton suggests despair of humanity unless rescued from without, much more does Hobbes, and the Saviour for Hobbes is nothing better than the State. To Hobbes the sole remedy for the " natural " war of all men against alllies in absolute obedience to that mighty " Leviathan," that " artificial man, of greater stature and strength than the natural," the State that is endowed with an authority overwhelming enough to enforce all its decrees. Hobbes' distrust of human nature dominates his entire thought, although, following classic tradition, he will on occasion use the term " natural law " for the highest dictates of conscience. But it is almost always with the conviction that such " law " can never be strong enough by itself to control our " natural " selfishness. " For the laws of Nature," he writes, " as ' justice,' ' equity,' and in sum ' doing to others as we would be done to,' of themselves, without the terror of some power to cause them to be observed, are contrary to our natural passions that carry us to partiality, to pride, revenge and the like. And covenants, without the sword, are but words and of no strength to secure a man at all." Hobbes' dread of anarchy easily outweighs any misgiving about tyranny. " The sovereign power whether placed in one man, as in monarchy, or in one assembly of men, as in popular and aristocratical commonwealths," is to be " as great as possibly men can be imagined to make it." " And, though of so unlimited a power men may fancy many evil consequences, yet the consequences of the want of it, which

is perpetual war of every man against his neighbour, are much worse." ("Leviathan," chap. 20.)

Hobbes accepts the traditional idea of a covenant between the citizens lying at the base of all civil society, an idea that goes back to Plato and Aristotle and that was later to be revived with extraordinary effect by Rousseau. But his conception of it is meagre, the "fundamental law of Nature" on which it rests being no more than a man's willingness to give up part of his liberty "only so far forth as for peace and defence of himself he shall think it necessary," and only if other men will do the like.

Further, the sovereign authority which is to secure that covenant once constituted, Hobbes would suffer any oppression rather than risk its overthrow. "Private judgment" is "a poison" to the commonwealth. In action conscience must submit to the State. The supreme object of the covenant being to guard against civil war, it is absurd to invoke civil war in its name. Yet if in fact one sovereign should be overthrown and another set up effectively Hobbes would transfer his allegiance without scruple. He has no particular preference for hereditary monarchy. The power to keep order is the real claim on loyalty. *De facto* is for him *de jure*. Hence, while the vigour of his thought, his shrewd insight into human weakness, and his sense of civil order attracted attention everywhere, he aroused violent opposition both from the partisans of divine right and from those who held that the citizens could never part with their own ultimate authority, and would be morally justified in deposing by force any unworthy sovereign.

CHAPTER XXXI

DESPOTISM IN FRANCE: LITERATURE AND THE FORCES OF CRITICISM

HOBBES on utilitarian grounds goes as far in support of despotic power as any English writer has ever gone, and it is significant that during his lifetime Richelieu had been strengthening the bases of despotism in France. Here again the political threads had intertwined with the religious. The Edict of Nantes under Henri IV had, it will be remembered, granted great religious freedom to the Huguenots; it had opened to them all offices of State—in this respect far more liberal than English practice towards Roman Catholic and Nonconformist—and it had secured them in their control of certain fortresses, a concession that had made it possible for them to build up centres of what was practically self-government. And this precisely was what Richelieu would not tolerate. His ideal, like that of Hobbes, was a strong government under one sovereign, although he had no horror of free thought as such. The siege and fall of La Rochelle (1627–1628) soon after his accession to office, marked the end of the Huguenot military power, but their religious liberty was not curtailed, neither then, nor for more than two generations. The political independence that Richelieu denied to the Huguenots he denied to others. The States-General were never summoned: the Parlements were kept strictly to narrow legal functions. The powers of the nobles in governing their provinces were cut down so as to make them incapable of active resistance to the Crown. Royal officials took their place. Taxation for public purposes and the power to raise

troops was left wholly in the hands of the king. But the nobles and the great clergy were allowed, for their own undoing, to keep their personal privileges. They were practically exempt from taxation, and they enjoyed many, and those among the most odious, of the ancient feudal claims on the lives and services of their tenants.

Serfage lingered in France until the Revolution itself. And with it and sheltering it stood for a century and a half the system inaugurated by Richelieu, though menaced at first by spasmodic revolt, as in the days of the Fronde, and undermined later by its own corruption and the insight of its critics. It was, as first set-up, the strongest and most coherent system of bureaucracy under one ruler that Europe had seen since the Roman Empire, and capable, in the hands of upright officials, of remarkable vigour, especially for aggressive war. A supreme Council appointed by the King directed and held together the different departments. The Huguenots were consoled for the loss of political power by the wide tolerance of their religion, the nobles and the priests by the endorsement of their privileges. And the nation at large accepted the despotism partly, as in the days of Louis XI, for the sake of peace and order after the long strain of war at home, partly because the main drift since Louis XI had in fact accustomed them to a centralized monarchy, and partly again because they were bewitched by the glamour of foreign conquest. It was under Richelieu that France began to succeed against Germany in the coveted border provinces, it was under Mazarin, his successor and the inheritor of his ideas, that her gains were confirmed, and a decade later, (1658), through the strange alliance with Oliver, the leader of Puritan England, she secured a notable triumph against Spain.

Despotism in France might have led the country to the condition of Spain, had it not been that Frenchmen never lost the spirit of criticism. The impulse shown in Rabelais, Montaigne, and the Huguenots remained strong. Even supporters of Richelieu could keep their private judgment in play. The forceful, intellectual genius of Corneille throws a singularly interesting light on the spirit of the more liberal

among those who, in spite of misgivings, made their peace with absolutism. Corneille is the first of the great French dramatists, born at the opening of the century, (b. 1606, d. 1684), and his most striking plays, written at the time of the Cardinal's dominance, show his pre-occupation with politics. And it is in his political dramas that his strength is manifest. Elsewhere, perhaps influenced by his Spanish models, he is apt to lose himself in over-strained and even false conceptions of honour and delicacy. But no writer has a loftier sense of the tragic clash between ideals, or a stronger rhetoric. There is some truth in calling him a rhetorician rather than a poet, but sincere and splendid rhetoric may produce magnificent art. His characters are rather types than individual persons, but they are types corresponding to momentous realities, especially in the world of action. Over his first play of this kind, *Le Cid*, he almost quarrelled with his domineering patron. Richelieu was struggling to put down duelling among the nobles and could have little taste for a drama where a duel was defiantly made into a leading incident, one too in which the hero was a nobleman

"plus grand que les rois."

A year later, however, Corneille dedicated to Richelieu one of his finest efforts, *Les Horaces*, the note of which is the conflict between private affection and public duty. Still more significantly, *Cinna ou La Clémence d'Auguste* turns on the choice between chaotic liberty and orderly despotism. The final decision is for such a despotism, but only if it is also generous, and only after long and serious doubt.

The sympathy of understanding is to be felt in the portrayal of Cinna's passion for liberty, though it drives him to the edge of political murder, and in the fiery denunciation of those suicidal combats where the leaders massacre their countrymen for the sake of mastery and the soldiers die, not for freedom but for servitude, hiding their treachery to a nobler cause in the world-wide throng of their fellow slaves :

"ces tristes batailles
Où Rome, par ses mains, déchirait ses entrailles,

Où l'aigle abattait l'aigle, et de chaque côté
Nos légions s'armaient contre leur liberté ;
Où les meilleurs soldats et les chefs les plus braves
Mettaient toute leur gloire à devenir esclaves ;
Où, pour mieux assurer la honte de leurs fers,
Tous voulaient à leur chaine attacher l'univers ;
Et l'exécrable honneur de lui donner un maître
Faisait aimer à tous l'infâme nom de traître.
Romains contre Romains, parents contre parents
Combattaient seulement pour le choix des tyrans."

Augustus himself, against whom Cinna conspires, meditates whether he ought not to surrender his autocracy, and only decides to hold it for the sake of Rome's unity. He is drawn as no hypocrite ; his singleness of mind is proved by his complete mastery of himself and his complete forgiveness of the conspiracy he discovers. He puts aside personal resentment from a deeper personal pride :

" Je suis maître de moi comme de l'univers :
Je le suis, je veux l'être."

The immediate climax (inspired ultimately by a passage in Seneca already familiar to Frenchmen through Montaigne's most happy rendering) was at once acclaimed throughout France. The clemency of Augustus drew tears, so Voltaire tells us, from the impetuous Condé when an eager lad of twenty, the Condé who was to be, later on, both rebel and penitent. " Le grand Corneille faisant pleurer le grand Condé d'admiration est une époque bien celèbre dans l'histoire de l'esprit humain." (*Siècle de Louis XIV*, c. 32.)

Augustus offers Cinna not pardon only, but friendship :

" Soyons amis, Cinna ; c'est moi qui t'en convie."

Equal renown was won by the lines that close the drama when Augustus bids the rebel leaders let their accomplices know

" Qu' Auguste a tout appris et veut tout oublier."

Such was the model that Corneille, like Seneca long before him, set up for the despots of his country, such the lesson he read them, " un grand leçon de moeurs," as Voltaire truly called

it. And Talleyrand's brilliant epigram two centuries later when the Bourbons of his day returned after the Revolution, "having learnt nothing and forgotten nothing," loses half its sting and sparkle unless we remember *Cinna*.

A nation that produced such writers as Corneille was not likely to endure despotism for ever. But for long years, and on the surface, despotism was triumphant. It leaves many a mark of fulsome flattery on the literature of the time, and might have been disastrous except for the all-important fact that Frenchmen, including the French king, were prepared to pay a high price for intellect and wit. It was the policy of Louis XIV to gather round him not courtiers only but brilliant authors. And his taste in authorship, allowing for his personal prejudices, was sound enough. If we resent a certain vulgarity in the grandiose and arrogant display of Versailles, we must admit also that the Sun-King could shed his light on authors who were not vulgar. It was his laughter that rescued *Les Plaideurs* of Racine and his patronage that protected Molière. But once admit such laughter and a way is opened for the solvent of criticism. The aristocratic age of Louis XIV was an age of incisive wit as well as of ease, polish, stately rhetoric. And in this it was nursing a possible corrective for itself.

The deeper emotions, indeed, were seldom touched. Almost alone among his contemporaries Racine could express genuine passion, and to this he owes his high place among French tragedians. Again and again through the pellucid flow of his verse and within the narrow limits he had chosen, the limits of "classicism" and the *bienséance* of a luxurious society, we can feel the flash of its power. The tragic part of his "Phèdre," written when Euripides inspired him, has always been coveted by the great French actresses, the queen, as Sarah Bernhardt played her, most royal, most seductive, swept through and through by desire, tenderness, shame, jealousy, and remorse, capable of treachery in her despair, and capable of redeeming it by a last controlled dismissal of herself from life.

But Racine is not often at this height and there seems a thinness in his genius when we contrast him with Molière.

It is scarcely paradoxical to say that there is something more tragic in Molière's comedy than in Racine's tragedy. Molière is so human and sees so deep; right through the pretences of the actual life all round him, laughing, no doubt, at its absurdities, but sore at heart, for all his laughter, at its meanness and deceit. It would narrow Molière ridiculously to think of him merely as a critical moralist; he is too richly tolerant, too full of the gusto of life for that. The artist in him delights in men as they are:

> "Je prends tout doucement les hommes comme ils sont,
> J'accoutume mon âme à souffrir ce qu'ils font."
> (*Le Misanthrope.*)

Still such lines in themselves indicate that he did suffer and had to train himself to endure. In his "Tartuffe," the powerful hypocrite, stronger than any of the slighter virtuous characters about him, stands out as so menacing a portent that we are not surprised to learn the play was twice forbidden through the influence of the clergy, although we smile at the eagerness with which they fitted the cap to themselves.

The time abounds in graceful essayists, epigrammatists, fabulists, letter writers, memoir writers. But these are noteworthy not only for polish, freshness, sparkle, as in Mme. de Sevigné and La Fontaine. There are men among them of sterner stuff. And La Fontaine himself has a keen eye for the outrageous arrogance of the privileged classes. Oppression may not grieve him, but it certainly rouses his wit:

"Vous les faites en leur croquant, Seigneur, beaucoup d'honneur."

There is much truth and shrewdness in the old saying that the *ancien régime* was a system of "despotism tempered by epigrams."

La Rochefoucauld, La Bruyère, Saint-Simon command a deadly criticism, the more telling because of its studied restraint, levelled at a system of which all the same they were proud to feel themselves a part. If they were not men to make a Revolution, their mordant wit did a good deal to prepare the way for it. When they cut into the human heart they were

not careful to spare the great. La Rochefoucauld struck at all men when he wrote, "Nous avons tous assez de force pour supporter les maux d'autrui." The old *frondeur* has a special fling at the tricks of monarchs and their advisers. "La clémence des princes n'est souvent qu'une politique pour gagner l'affection des peuples." La Bruyère, pillorying the tax-farmer who ground the faces of the poor, has no mind to let off the nobleman who profited by his wealth: "Si le financier manque son coup, les courtisans disent de lui; c'est un bourgeois, un homme de rien, un malotru; s'il réussit, ils lui demandent sa fille."

Saint-Simon takes a malicious delight in uncovering the network of intrigue, the self-seeking, even the gross physical foulness, beneath the dazzling elegance of Versailles; and his careful portraiture of Louis XIV does not hesitate to emphasize the pettiness in the royal character or the mistakes in the royal despotism. It is remarkable that this French nobleman of the *haute noblesse*, Catholic by belief, tradition, and pride of race, should have chosen for especial blame Louis' Revocation of the Edict of Nantes (1685). The Huguenots, Saint-Simon recognizes, had been inoffensive citizens for many years. But now—and he writes with a sneer as solemn as Gibbon's—"The King had become pious, while remaining profoundly ignorant. His policy reinforced his piety. His councillors played on his most sensitive points, his religion and his passion for power. They painted the Huguenots in the blackest colours:—a State within the State, that had won its licence through riot, revolt, civil war, foreign intrigue, open rebellion against his royal ancestors. But they were extremely careful not to touch on the cause of all those ancient evils. . . . They inspired their fervent disciple with the longing for a signal act of penitence, perfectly easy, performed at the expense of others, and ensuring his own salvation. They captivated his kingly pride by the thought of an achievement surpassing the power of all his predecessors. . . . Thus they led him, the man who piqued himself on governing alone, to strike a masterstroke at once for Church and State, securing the triumph of the true religion by destroying all the rest, and

making the monarch absolute for good by breaking every link with the Huguenot rebels and rooting them out for ever."

Then follows a thunderous roll of indignation. "The Revocation of the Edict, without the least reason, without even the shadow of an excuse, and the proscriptions which followed it were the fruit of this shameful plot. It depopulated a quarter of the kingdom, ruined its trade, weakened it through and through, plundered it, openly and admittedly, by the dragonnades, authorized tortures and punishments that involved the death of thousands, innocent men and women; it brought destruction to a whole people, tore families asunder, incited brothers to rob brothers and let them starve; it drove our manufacturers abroad, bringing prosperity and opulence at our expense to foreign States, giving them new cities, peopled, to the wonder of the world, by these amazing exiles who had been driven out naked and desolate, for no fault of their own, to seek shelter in banishment; it doomed men of birth, men of wealth, old men, men often reverenced for their piety, their knowledge, their goodness, men accustomed to comfort, infirm and frail:—it doomed them to the galleys and the slave whip, for the sole crime of their religion."

Saint-Simon's picture may be overdrawn, influenced by his personal hatred of Madame de Maintenon and the Jesuits, but it is one of the many instances tending to show how cultured circles in France were far more ready to protest against religious oppression than against political absolutism. The nobles received privileges from the political autocrat, but the St. Bartholomew, not, after all, so long ago, had struck impartially at gentle and simple, and the philosopher Descartes, more recently, had found it prudent to live in exile.

Saint-Simon, with equal prudence, never dared to publish any of his scathing comments during his own lifetime. A more redoubtable attack had been delivered by the open "Lettres Provinciales" of Pascal (b. 1623, d. 1662), a delicate and fierce unmasking of the incredible sophistry into which the lust for dominance had led the Jesuit leaders. The "Letters" are a known landmark in the development of French prose. As Voltaire said of them later, "they contain every kind of

eloquence " ; quiet fatal incisiveness as of a great gentleman who does not need to raise his voice, brilliant mockery, grave irony, direct fearless invective, impassioned rhetoric.

One speculates whither Pascal's critical faculty would have led him if he had gone on with his life. But the critical faculty was only one side of his strange and highly-dowered temperament. He stands between two worlds. A mathematical genius, an acute researcher in physics, he was powerfully attracted to the opening world of modern science. But more powerful still was the attraction of the old mystical religion that offered the soul a shelter from the desolate spaces of an infinite lonely universe : " Le silence éternel de ces espaces infinis m'effraie." With a fervour recalling Loyola's, intense and terrible through its fear, Pascal flung himself back into the inward life of a mediæval saint. " Le coeur a ses raisons que la raison ne connaît pas." But the Age of Reason was advancing inevitably and Descartes had already been brooding over its foundations. A new principle of unity was beginning to appear, the unity in a type of thought where the appeal should be not to authority but to argument supported by a verifiable correspondence with facts.

PART IV.—MODERN

CHAPTER XXXII

THE TRIUMPHS OF MATHEMATICS

(F. S. Marvin)

THE second phase in the growth of modern science though following closely on and intimately connected with the first, is yet different in spirit and more ambitious in scope. Galileo is obviously the master-mind of the first; Descartes and Leibnitz are the leaders in the second. In the first phase the mind of Europe was awakening; it was shaking off the fetters of ecclesiastical control and unreasoning tradition; it was putting itself in contact with the world of nature, testing theory by careful observation and experiment and forming truer ideas of the process of events. In the second phase, encouraged by success, it went on to formulate schemes of the whole and attempted to see the universe as one harmonious set of laws, all dependent on a few simple principles. The attempt involved an extension of the mathematical method and found its chief exponent in Descartes. It corresponds in philosophy with the development of physical and astronomical science, and a later phase still, in which we now live, comes to the front in the nineteenth century with the growth of biology. Kant represents the turning-point here, the pioneer of the modern and relative spirit. Chemistry, as we shall see, is the linking science taking us beyond the laws of matter immediately susceptible to mathematical treatment and opening the way to the view of matter as the home of life. And chemistry is constituted as a science towards the end of the eighteenth century.

There was probably no period in history when so great strides were made in knowledge and the formation of knowledge as between the beginning of Galileo's work in 1590 and the *Acta Eruditorum* of Leibnitz in 1684. In less than a hundred years Galileo had laid down the main lines of the science of mechanics, Kepler had revealed the laws of the movements of the planets, Newton had linked up the two by the greatest of all physical generalizations, Pascal, Boyle and Mariotte had measured the pressure of the atmosphere, Harvey had discovered the circulation of the blood; the telescope, the microscope, the thermometer and the barometer were all brought into use, and, most important of intellectual facts, the new mathematical calculus had been invented, which was to give man the power of measuring all kinds of movement and change, as well as describing every form of geometrical shape.

The German Kepler, who must rank with the foremost builders of the ne wsynthesis, was a contemporary of Galileo. His life falls entirely within that of the great Italian, for he was born seven years after him in 1571, and being of a weaker constitution, died twelve years earlier, in 1630. Both of them accepted the Copernican hypothesis as young men, but while Galileo's more versatile mind was exploring physical phenomena of many kinds, Kepler's was devoted to investigating the laws that hold together the different members of the solar system. Unlike Newton, who was as sparing as possible of hypotheses, Kepler threw out one after another, ingenious, daring, and sometimes extravagant. He was brought into close contact with the facts by serving for two years as assistant to Tycho Brahé, a Danish astronomer, who was working in Bohemia for the Emperor Rudolf. Tycho was an untiring and accurate observer, and Kepler inherited his store of facts after his death in 1601. He went on to extend these observations in the case of the planet Mars and arrived at last at his first two laws of planetary motion:—(1) That a line drawn from the sun to the planet—a radius vector—marks out on the plane of its orbit equal areas in equal times. (2) That the planets move, not in circles as had been always previously assumed, but in ellipses with the sun at one of the foci. This was in

1609. Ten years later he discovered his third law. He had long known that the period of revolution increased with the distance of the planet from the sun. He found after long calculation that the law of the universe was that the squares of the periodic times are proportional to the cubes of the mean distances. Thus if the mean distance of the Earth from the sun and its period of revolution be taken as unity, and in the case of any other planet the distance be four or nine times greater, the period will be eight or twenty-seven times longer. This law has been since applied to predicting the period of a new planet, such as Uranus, when its distance had been ascertained.

These, with Galileo's law of falling bodies, are perhaps the simplest, best known and most illustrative examples of what is meant by a "law of nature." They show how, in the seventeenth century, more accurate observations were taken hold of by developing mathematics and formed into a solid structure of thought.

Such thought is clearly both objective and subjective in origin. It derives from the actual phenomena of motion which man does not originate, but, as an ideal construction, it belongs to man's collective mind developing progressively in time.

Kepler reached his laws by induction from observed facts. Newton, with a more powerful synthetic mind and a better calculus, was able to deduce them mathematically from the laws of motion. Although a generation, including the work of Descartes, intervened between Kepler and Newton, it will be more convenient to consider Newton's work in this connection as completing Kepler's. Kepler had shown reason for thinking that the force which explained his laws must proceed from the sun, but he believed that this force varied inversely as the distance. Galileo, on his part, had contributed the law of falling bodies which we gave in a preceding chapter. In 1665 Newton, reflecting on this, thought of investigating the space through which the moon in a given time was deflected from a straight path, i.e. the amount of her fall towards the earth. He found that this was thirteen feet in a minute. He took the best estimate of the earth's magnitude which he knew and assuming that gravitation

acted inversely as the square of the distance, he calculated that the moon would fall in a minute not thirteen but fifteen feet. He therefore put the hypothesis aside for seven years when a more accurate measurement of the earth's magnitude had been made by the Abbé Picard in Paris.

He then took up the calculations again and had them completed for greater certainty by another person, not interested in his results. He now found his hypothesis confirmed. But even so, the great work remained of showing how Kepler's Third Law followed mathematically from Newton's hypothesis of a force of gravitation, acting inversely as the square of the distance. For this he needed the help of the work of Huygens, a Dutch astronomer and mathematician, on the composition of forces in circular motion. With this, and the aid of his own new Calculus, the work was done and the first two books of the "Principia" communicated to the Royal Society in 1686.

That we now have reason for thinking, through the labours of Einstein and his immediate predecessors, that the Newtonian laws may be regarded as part of a still larger generalization and are subject to correction in certain cases does not destroy their value nor prevent us regarding them as the greatest achievement of the human mind up to that time. And we note how men of all the leading civilized nations contributed their share to the result. Galileo, the Italian, was the prime mover in the train of thought; Kepler was a German, Picard a Frenchman, and Huygens Dutch.

But the same age was fruitful of many other advances in science, especially in physics, for it was to physics that the new mathematics gave most aid. Perhaps of all lines of physical research—next to that of falling bodies—the most fruitful in its ultimate results was that into the pressure of gases. It gave us within 150 years the steam engine, most potent transformer of human society since the Stone Age. Galileo had turned his attention to the question of atmospheric pressure but had not pursued it. A pump had been submitted to him in which it was desired to raise the water under the bucket to a greater height than 32 feet. He did

not understand at first why it was impossible to do this, but soon began to suspect that the atmosphere's weight was the true explanation. His pupil Torricelli, an accomplished mathematician, following out his lead, succeeded in 1643, the year after Galileo's death, in proving the hypothesis, and in measuring the weight of the atmosphere against first a column of water (32 feet high) and then a column of mercury (28 inches high). Mercury being about fourteen times the weight of water, the theory was corroborated in a striking way.[1]

Four years later Pascal, then in his twenty-fourth year, carried the inquiry further. He had different mercurial barometers measured at different heights and showed, by an experiment on the Puy de Dome in Auvergne, that the pressure of the atmosphere diminished as you ascended the mountain and had a less weight of air to sustain the mercury.

The same line of thought was pursued by Robert Boyle, son of the Earl of Cork, who had spent the last winter of Galileo's life (1641–2) near him in Florence and had come under the great man's influence. Boyle, after his return to Oxford, invented in 1659 an air pump and studied systematically the laws of atmospheric pressure. This enabled him to discover, simultaneously with Mariotte in France, the law that the condensation of air is in proportion to the weight pressing upon it, the law afterwards extended to all gases.

We notice, on the one hand, the continued extension of mathematical methods to the simpler phenomena of nature ; and, on the other, the swift application of these results to practical purposes. Within twenty years after these experiments on the pressure of the air, several machines had been invented, both in France and England, for utilizing atmospheric pressure for the raising of water. These were the direct ancestors of Newcomen's and Watt's steam engines by various stages which we have not space to explain here.

Sound and light also began to be measured in this fertile century, in the lifetime of Newton, who himself devoted much thought to the problems of optics. The part which light has played in recent theories and the supreme position which has

[1] Galloway, " The Steam Engine and its Inventors."

been assigned to its velocity, give all these earlier steps a special interest. Newton began his researches into the nature of light, as soon as he became Professor of Mathematics at Cambridge in 1669. He continued them for thirty-five years. He followed up the analysis of white light into its prismatic colours, which had been made by Descartes, and measured the different refrangibility of the different colours. He started the theory that light consisted of small particles, emitted with great velocity on direct lines from the light-giving object, and this theory disputed the ground for many years with that originated by Descartes and Huygens, that it was really caused by vibrations propagated in the ether. But the most striking discovery in connection with light—next to that of the spectrum—which was made at this time was due to a Dane called Roemer, who had worked in Paris under Picard. He found (1695) in observing the immersions and emersions of Jupiter's moons that they took place with a difference of sixteen minutes according to the relative positions of the Earth and Jupiter, on the same or opposite sides of the Sun. This meant that the light coming from Jupiter took sixteen minutes to traverse the diameter of the earth's orbit. His conclusions were confirmed and extended by Bradley in his observatory at Wanstead early in the next century.

Mathematics had made another and far-reaching conquest. Light, the most intangible of external phenomena, about the nature of which the greatest minds of the day were at that moment in dispute, was found to be measurable. Later researches, near to our own day, have brought the measurement of light into close relation with the measurement of the kindred phenomena of heat and electricity, by means of the new mathematical calculus,which, if we measure by results, was the greatest advance made in the seventeenth century by man's collective and constructing mind. To appreciate the genesis and nature of this, we need to return a few decades to Descartes' work in Amsterdam during the thirties of that century.

Born in 1596, Descartes was trained for eight years by the Jesuits, but found no satisfaction in the literary culture which he received. He turned to an active life for guidance in thought,

and served in the army and travelled from 1617 till 1628. Then, settling at last in Holland, he gave himself to philosophy in an atmosphere of greater freedom than he could find at that time in his own country of France. The next twenty years were his productive period. In 1649 he accepted an invitation from Queen Christina of Sweden, but died at Stockholm the following year from the effects of a Scandinavian winter.

From the first he sought some basis of thought not open to the attacks and questioning which assailed every conclusion in the traditional philosophy in which he had been trained. Literature did not give this, nor science as he then found it; it needed the mathematical discipline which he and his immediate successors were to provide. To mathematics, then, he betook himself, and influenced by mathematical thinking he evolved the most complete and coherent system which intervened between the scholastic philosophy of the middle ages and the encyclopædic systems that followed his own. We must start afresh, he said, from the simplest and most indubitable truths which every man's consciousness must admit. From these by mathematical methods he went on to explain the whole visible world in accordance with fixed laws derived from the facts of form and motion. The Cartesian system in its entirety has only a historical interest. It outran the conclusions of the many necessary sciences involved. But in so far as Descartes invented, in the course of his synthetic work, a new mathematical instrument, and insisted on the need of clear and consistent thinking, in so far as he laid the foundation of all future synthesis in the mind itself, he became one of the greatest builders of modern thought. His theory of matter is based on the application of clear thinking to the problems of space; it starts from geometry. He complained that the ancients confined themselves too much to the consideration of figures; he turned his attention to lines and, bringing together the methods of algebra and geometry, he showed that any straight line can, by using co-ordinates or perpendiculars drawn from each point to two given axes, be expressed as an equation of the first degree, and all conic sections, including the circle, as equations of the

second degree. It was an invention of the utmost importance, not only in itself as giving a fresh and incomparable instrument for exploring the properties of geometrical figures, but as a step leading immediately to an instrument of still wider scope—the differential calculus of Newton and Leibnitz.

It is interesting to note that almost at the same moment at which Descartes published his Geometry, another French mathematician, Fermat, published a work containing the same idea. As usual, great ideas were stirring in many minds at the same moment. We shall see the same thing with Newton and Leibnitz. But whereas Fermat's work was of limited scope, technical and practical, Descartes' was part of a far-reaching philosophy which led on to further discoveries and the unification of knowledge.

Man's mind was at last approaching a practical method of dealing with the infinitesimal quantities which at once beset us as soon as we attempt either to carry a process of division to its utmost limits or to consider what is involved in any process of physical growth. The early Greek thinkers were conscious of the difficulty. Zeno's famous problem of the hare and the tortoise presented it in the form of an ἀπορία or unsolved puzzle. The later Greek geometers, especially Archimedes, approached the problem more nearly from another point of view, in their Method of Exhaustions by which they measured a figure like a circle by summing up an infinite number of measurable sections into which it might be divided. But it was not until Descartes had invented his method of expressing geometrical relations in algebraical equations that it was possible to deal concisely and effectively with the infinitesimal; and the mathematical treatment of all questions of growth involves the infinitesimal. The Greeks were geometers. In the interval between Archimedes and Galileo algebra had grown up. A Greek, Diophantus, had given the first European examples of the method. The Arabs developed it, and in the sixteenth century Europeans resumed the study. Galileo founded the science of motion, Descartes brought geometry and algebra together, and within thirty years after his method was invented Newton and

Leibnitz had applied it to the calculation of the infinitesimal.

It was the crowning discovery of the first age of modern physics. It brought together the various lines of mechanical inquiry already pursued, and made possible their extension within the next two hundred years to all measurable phenomena. The equations of Lagrange in the time of Napoleon, of Clerk Maxwell in the seventies of the nineteenth century, are merely extensions of the methods of the men of the seventeenth. Light, heat, magnetism, and electricity were in this way all measured and brought into the unified world of mathematics. The practical results were in their way equally great. The whole of modern engineering, with its giant structures and its complex calculation of forces, depends as entirely on the calculus of Newton and Leibnitz as the steam-engine on the law of the pressure of gases.

Yet—and it is one of the most amazing gaps in our general education—not one person in a hundred, even in our higher schools, is taught the simple principles of the calculus. It is still regarded as an advanced and abstruse subject, only fit to be attempted by the very few who have shown marked ability in mastering the earlier branches of mathematics, instead of being, as it is, the unifying aspect of mathematics which subsumes all the other methods of calculation and applies them to the problems of the moving world. That the right view is now gaining ground is shown by the increasing number of works in which it is intelligently presented. To do this generally in education, with the due historical preparation, would induce more than any other single reform the synthetic spirit, the need of which we shall note in our closing chapter.

It would be a fascinating subject, and important too from the philosophical standpoint, to trace the conquests of mathematics in the sphere of chemistry. Less obvious to calculation than the masses studied by the early physicists, the molecule and the atom of the chemist have also within the last three hundred years come within the range of quantitative analysis, though we cannot include chemistry within the scope of mathematics to the same extent as we can

physics. Three steps, however, may be noted which show the advance of the mathematical spirit into the realm of the "kinds and qualities of matter." It was by the use of the balance that Priestley and Lavoisier, following Mayo, discovered the true nature of combustion, the crucial point in the creation of a scientific chemistry. The atomic theory at the beginning of the nineteenth century arises from Dalton's discovery of a mathematical rule governing the combination of atoms in chemical union, while in the latter part of the century Mendeleeff advances the atomic theory by his Periodic Law which exhibits the elements ranged in a mathematical order according to their atomic weight. And this mathematical aspect of the elements seems also to be related with their other qualities and their diffusion in nature.

The story might be extended. We might show the recent appearance of similar laws in biology. But for our present purpose it is better to conclude here with the work of the great man of the seventeenth century who, while showing to the full the mathematical development of his time, already points the way to the relativity of our own day.

Leibnitz, of whom more hereafter, came much nearer to the conception that the truths of mechanical theory may be only relatively true, that we have no reason for inferring they exist *as such* elsewhere than in our own mind. The truth which the calculus serves, disregarding problems irrelevant for its purpose, may be merely the truth by which man has mastered for his own ends certain laws of movement and growth.

Leibnitz, by laying stress on the difficulties in regarding Time, Space, and Motion as absolute, prepared the way not only for modern attempts at more coherent mechanics than were then matured, but also for the further analysis of Kant. Since his time the progress in both branches of science, physics and psychology, has done much to confirm the principle that all our knowledge is relative to, dependent on, and partly created by, the thinking mind, and that the synthesis we hope for, must be, not an absolute, but a human one, including in that term all the sentience of which our mind is the highest manifestation as yet known to us.

CHAPTER XXXIII

THE RISE OF MODERN PHILOSOPHY: DESCARTES, SPINOZA, LEIBNITZ

THE considerations in the last pages may become clearer if we go back a little and take up the work of Descartes in philosophy proper as distinct from science. Certainty as to the nature of actual existence was, he himself would have us know, the thing he sought above all else, and even mathematics could not of itself give him that. Therefore he set himself deliberately to doubt everything, not idly, but as a sifting-test for truth, " non que j'imitasse pour cela les sceptiques qui ne doutent que pour douter et affectent d'être toujours irrésolus ; car au contraire, tout mon dessein ne tendait qu'à m'assurer et à rejeter la terre mouvante et le sable pour trouver le roc ou l'argile." (" Discours sur la Méthode.")

Pushing doubt to its furthest reach, he found there was one thing at least he could not doubt, namely, the existence of himself while he doubted. Here, then, was something he was compelled to affirm as *existing* even while he attempted to deny it. He felt he had gained a sure hold on existence at last, possibly a point from which to move the whole world of thought through a principle on which the mind could rest. And in all soberness his famous inference, " Je pense, donc je suis," " I think, therefore I am," did give a new starting-point to philosophy and suggest a method at least relatively new, the method, namely, of showing by critical analysis that certain principles are implicit in all thought, seeing that the very attempt to deny them involves their affirmation.

The procedure of Descartes, so far, is clear and cogent, but it must be admitted that there is confusion as well as profundity in his next philosophical doctrine. His "proof" of God's existence, derived as it is in part from mediæval thinkers, can be put, and is often put by himself, in a form that is fallacious. None the less, it contains ideas of high value. In the first place, it must be remembered that to Descartes "God" could mean the sum of all positive reality. Now, is it not impossible to deny that such Reality exists? Surely it is, whatever that Reality may turn out to be. This bare admission, indeed, takes us at first only a very little way. This "God" is far enough from the Christian "God" the existence of whom Descartes desired to prove. But even this step leads at once to the question: Is this Reality, this total sum of things that I am forced to admit, the same as the thinking Self I was also forced to admit? It is conceivable at first blush that the answer should be Yes, and the position taken that I alone am the one being in the universe. But, critically examined, the answer itself breaks down. So far from there being any reason to maintain it rather than to doubt it in its turn, a man's consciousness, so Descartes held, referred him continually to something beyond. In the first place he is aware of himself not only as a thinking being, but as an *imperfect* thinking being. And how could he be aware of his imperfection at all if in some way he was not also aware of a Perfection, not his but desired by him?

"Faisant reflexion sur ce que je doutais, et que, par conséquent, mon être n'était pas tout parfait, car je voyais clairement que c'était une plus grande perfection de connaître que de douter, je m'avisai de chercher d'où j'avais appris à penser à quelque chose de plus parfait que je n'étais, et je connus evidemment que ce devait être de quelque nature qui fut en effet plus parfaite." ("Discours sur la Méthode.")

Thus he reaches the idea of a God who is the strength of man's weakness, known to him in the effort of his human consciousness. It is a line of thought with close affinities not only to the past, recalling many of Plato's arguments about the Eternal and Perfect Ideas, but also to all those

vigorous faiths of the future which, like the belief in genuine progress, recognize a universal standard of values discoverable by the reason of man. In the hands of Leibnitz, a similar doctrine becomes central, as we shall see.

Starting with the self and God, Descartes next turned to the "material" world. And here his recognition of self-consciousness on the one hand and his interest in mathematics on the other led him to hold, first, that Thought is in no sense to be identified with the "matter" that exists in Space, the thing that has length and breadth and thickness and is, in metaphysical phrase, "extended." There is no sense in speaking, except metaphorically, of "a square thought." On the other hand, Descartes could not bring himself to give up the conviction that *something* existed that was extended: his geometrical discoveries brought too vividly before him what seemed self-evident truths concerning space, offering a coherent explanation of all the phenomena forcing themselves on our senses. God would surely not delude us, he pleads, to the degree that would be involved if there were no reality in that explanation. The argument, so put, is lame, but it indicates clearly enough Descartes' line of thought. The extended world of Matter was therefore taken as real, but the apparent interaction between it and the wholly different world of Mind remained an enigma. With the Cartesian attempt at a solution we cannot deal here. But it is necessary to state that he did not conceive this Matter, though real, as forming part of God's reality. It was created by Him: it was not of His essence. Yet this separation of anything real from God runs counter to the argument for God's existence as the sum of positive reality.

It is here that Baruch Spinoza (b. 1632, d. 1677), "the descendant of Jews driven out from Portugal by the Inquisition," one of the noblest men and perhaps the most impressive philosopher who ever lived, parts company with Descartes. Spinoza's fundamental idea is that Real Being must form a rational whole, that one eternal and infinite self-complete Reality exists, called by him Substance or God, that of this Substance there are an endless number of essential qualities

or " Attributes," each of which expresses Its total nature, but that of these Attributes two only are known to us, the spiritual and the spatial, Mind and Matter, each of them articulated into an endless number of particulars all of which are linked together by definite connexions. Even these Attributes are only known to us in an imperfect fashion, through those fragmentary manifestations of their particulars that Spinoza calls the Finite Modes, borrowing the term " Mode " from Descartes to mean an appearance that flows from a deeper reality but does not adequately express It. We ourselves are among these finite modes.

He would be a bold man who claimed to understand Spinoza fully ; perhaps he did not fully understand himself. Yet no philosopher has been more inspiring, not only to trained metaphysicians, but to the plain man. There is a story of Madame de Staël finding Balzac as a little boy reading the Ethics. She asked him if he understood what he read. He looked up. " You pray to God ? " he asked her in his turn. And she nodded. " Does that mean you understand Him ? " And she had nothing to say. A spirit goes out from Spinoza's writing that fortifies the student even where he fails to comprehend the master or feels compelled to call him inconsistent. The genius of the man and the unselfishness of his character have stamped themselves on his style.

Moreover, Spinoza's large scheme promises to combine at their root the spiritual and the spatial. The plain man cannot bring himself to believe that the mathematical construction of things to which we seem forced by physical science does not correspond in the last resort to some reality beyond his own thinking. But neither can he believe that the thought which thinks out this construction is itself a mere by-product of shapes in motion. Hence the appeal of Spinoza's daring and complex doctrine, asserting, (1) that Space (Extension) and its qualities in their totality really do form an Attribute of the Infinite Substance which thinks, (2) that we ourselves are fragments of that same Thinking Substance, but (3) that the Thinking of that Substance, when It thinks as a whole, is incomprehensibly beyond ours, inasmuch as It is able

to combine Its thoughts completely with Reality and is creative in a sense that we are not. A man is not the whole cause of another man's nature, but "the Thought of God is the cause both of our nature and of our existence" ("Ethics," Part I., Prop. 17, Schol.). With God Perception and the Thing Perceived are absolutely united. "The circle existing in Nature and the idea in God of the existing circle are one thing and the same, made manifest by different attributes" (ib., P. II., Prop. 7, Schol.). This is a truth, adds Spinoza, seen dimly by the Hebrews who taught the unity of God, His thought, and what He thinks of. But all this is far above our human thought, as far as the heavens are above the earth: "toto cælo differre deberent." For us the conception of a thing and the actual existence of the thing do not combine in this complete way; we can only conceive a circle by thinking of something else outside that circle and so on for ever, never holding within us fully articulated the whole sum of Reality. There is thus, it may be confessed, something "mystical" in Spinoza's idea of God as the absolute union of Thought and Being, something that we apprehend but do not comprehend, by which I mean something that appears necessary to the logical completion of our thought, but which our thought does not fully grasp. But man, although he can only go from step to step among the infinite details of the two Divine Attributes alone accessible to him, can at least do this much, and in the doing of it lies his link of union with God and his liberation from servitude. In so far as he learns to see both "material" things and "mental" in their true connexion with each other, he sees more of God. "Quo magis res singulares intelligimus, eo magis Deum intelligimus" (V., Prop. 24).

The work of science is thus in its essence religious, and the desire for knowledge part of that "intellectual love of God" which is the crown of man. The more we see things so, the more we see them "under the form of eternity," "sub specie æternitatis," since we see them more and more connected with everything else in the whole universe. At times, indeed very often, Spinoza wrote as though this power in man lifted the most essential part of him into eternity: "We feel and

know by experience that we are eternal" (V., Prop. 23, Schol.). What precisely he meant by this it is hard to say, but possibly that a man's power of thought passed after the dissolution of his body into the eternal life of God, though the man as a separate individual ceased to exist. It is obvious at least that he conceived of man's mind as on a different footing from his body. "The mind of man cannot absolutely be destroyed with the destruction of the body; something of it remains which is eternal."

Further, we should not only see things "under the form of eternity," we should also *feel* them so. Our wills and our emotions should be brought into harmony with this fundamental truth. It is not for nothing that Spinoza called his great work "Ethics." He was stimulated by Hobbes as well as by Descartes, and he was led to his system largely by his instinct that there must be some way to deliver man from that war of all against all which Hobbes found in the state of nature. Hobbes, as we pointed out, saw no escape but by the external defences of Government, a man giving up part of his liberty in order to be protected in the rest of his efforts towards self-preservation. Spinoza, while almost as great a political absolutist as Hobbes, cuts far deeper. A man, he holds with Hobbes, must necessarily desire his own preservation. The *conatus in suo esse perseverari* is a vital part of him. But when he comes to understand himself at all he sees that his real self, the only part of him that is not based on delusion, is made up by his connexion with other men and other things. They are the completion of himself, and the more harmony between them and him the more harmony in himself. In this way man is set free from his bondage of illusion and hatred and cowardice. He welcomes the life of the city not simply because it is safer, but because he finds in it more links with other men and therefore more of that larger Self, that free and brave self, which, could it grow large enough, would be God. "A man who is led by Reason attains more liberty in a City where he lives in accordance with the laws than in a solitude where he only considers himself" (IV., Prop. 73).

"A man who is led by Reason will not be led by Fear." "It is scarcely worth proving in detail," Spinoza adds, "that a brave man can hate no one, be angry with no one, nor envious, nor reproachful, can despise no one, and can never be arrogant." Moreover, "a brave man will bear in mind that all things follow from the nature of the Divine Being and therefore whatever he considers hurtful or evil, whatever seems impious, horrible, unjust, or foul, springs from the fact that he sees things disorderedly, confusedly, and by fragments; and therefore he will strive first and foremost to conceive things as they really are and sweep aside all that hinders true knowledge, such as Hatred, Anger, Jealousy, Contempt, Pride . . . and finally struggle to the best of his power, as we said before, to do good and to rejoice."

The last quotation brings us face to face with the question, How, if *all things* are derived from a Perfect Substance, can there be even the delusion of Imperfection? The student asks if the question of evil and error has not rather been shelved than solved? In general the criticisms on Spinoza all centre on the question exactly *how* does he derive this world of finite particulars from the God who is infinite? Spinoza, condemned by his brother Jews as an a-theist and excommunicated from their fellowship, was rather to be blamed, as Hegel says, for being an a-kosmist, one in whose system there was no clear place for the faulty cosmos in which at least we appear to live. It is not God who is conceivably denied in Spinoza's system but rather the Individual Man. Spinoza was indeed "drunk with God," and perhaps after all the greatest service he does for us is that at moments he enables us to share his intoxication.

Less striking than Spinoza and far less fine in character, but of astonishing endowment, the German Leibnitz approached the problem from the opposite standpoint, that of the individualist. Dominant throughout his system is the thought of individual living centres, conscious, or *sub*-conscious—not *un*conscious—as the sole realities in the world. To these he gives the name of *monads*, as the only things that can claim to be real unities, and he conceives them after the

fashion of selves, human selves, or selves lower and higher than human. The highest Monad, on which in some fashion all the rest depend, he calls God. The nature of all the lower monads consists in varying degrees of effort and knowledge. "In a confused way they all strive after the infinite, the whole; but they are limited and differentiated through the degrees of their distinct perception" ("Monadology," § 60, Latta's tr.). It is of their essence to be aware, each of them, of the whole universe, however obscurely, from an individual point of view. Against Locke the Englishman Leibnitz stressed the power of thought in the self as distinct from mere sensation. To the traditional dictum, "There is nothing in the intellect that has not already been in sensation," he made the pregnant addition, "except the intellect itself." [1]

Leibnitz seems led to his system by three main threads. (1) Following Descartes, he accepts the view that our selves and our efforts are known to us more directly than the existence of material things. But Descartes had, after all, accepted the existence of the material world on the ground, metaphysically weak, that God would not delude us. Leibnitz mocked at this argument and insisted that there was no reason for thinking that such concepts as those of shape and movement, any more than such percepts as those of colour and sound, could exist just so apart altogether from any perceiving or conceiving subject. On the contrary. Something other than ourselves, indeed, may *correspond* to them, and truth depend on this correspondence, but Leibnitz considers it obvious, as Berkeley was to expound to English readers a little later, that sensations cannot exist without something to feel them, nor relations in space and time—movement as such, for example—without the possibility of being observed.

(2) The *possibility* of being observed, we should note, does not mean actual observation. Leibnitz is quite definite here. Confronted by the Englishman Clarke with the question

[1] "Die philosophischen Schriften von G. W. Leibnitz," edited by C. J. Gerhardt, Berlin, 1875–90. (Referred to in text as G.) Vol. 7, p. 488.

whether a ship could not move without every cabin-passenger remarking it, he wrote, " Je réponds que le mouvement est indépendent de l'observation, mais qu'il n'est point indépendent de l'observabilité. Il n'y a point de mouvement quand il n'y a point de changement observable. Et méme quand il n'y a point de changement observable, il n'y a point de changement du tout " (G., 7, p. 403).

Following this train of thought he stoutly maintained, in opposition to Newton, most brilliant of mathematicians and astronomers, but no metaphysician, that space could not be conceived as absolute, that is, as anything apart from the relation of the " matter " that occupied it, and that all motion, from the physical and mathematical point of view, could only be conceived as relative (" New System," § 18, Latta's). As a mathematician Leibnitz could hold his own against Newton, and recent researches, notably Einstein's, appear to support him in a remarkable way. But Leibnitz went further. He pressed the consequences of his theory. If absolute motion can never be detected by the methods of mechanics (since nothing can be observed except change of position relative to other apparent bodies), what follows ?

First, so it would appear, that mechanics, and mathematics generally, are incomplete, and can give us no ultimate explanation, since we can never know by their means which bodies in the last resort are actively in motion and which are not, any more than a railway passenger whose vision is confined to his own train and another passing it can tell which of the two is travelling. Yet one of them it must be. Must we, then, be content to admit our ignorance and hope for no further success by any other method ? Leibnitz, certainly, was not content with this conclusion, though many thinkers since his day have been. Admitting inadequacy in mechanics, he still sought for an ultimate distinction and urged that it must lie in some non-mechanical, non-material principle, and this he thought he found in his centres of living energy, the activities of which may be represented, *but only inadequately*, by the appearances of motion according to uniform laws. Movement, in short, is for him ultimately

a sign of life, and to conceive the universe as " dead " matter is to leave mechanism itself incomplete.

Again the problem of infinite divisibility led him to the same results. Multitude must involve units, but where can an ultimate unit be found in a " matter " which, however small it be, can always be conceived as once again divisible ? If we are to find real units at all, they must be units of vital force which, being themselves non-spatial, may also be non-divisible, which may lie at the base of the physical universe, and from which may proceed, in some way not yet clear to us, its coherent and multiform appearances. Such coherent appearances Leibnitz called " well-founded phenomena," capable of explanation up to a certain point by mathematics, but always implying something over and above : " ne donnant jamais un démenti aux règles des pures mathématiques, mais contenant toujours quelque chose au delà " (G., 7, p. 564). " Everything in physical nature," he writes elsewhere, " proceeds by mechanical laws, but the principles of mechanism itself do not depend on mere matter " (G., 7, p. 489).

(3) From another standpoint Leibnitz, deeply influenced, as he tells us himself, by Plato, seeking an answer to the question why, after all, the world exists, could be satisfied with none that did not conceive it as a constant striving for perfection. After all, as Plato said, the only reason that seems sufficient to us for a thing existing is that it is good that it should exist. Thus Leibnitz deliberately revived Plato's audacious thought, so fascinating to the mediævalists, of the Perfect Good as something that was the source both of Being and Knowledge, " beyond existence, and greater in majesty and power " (Rep. 509), or, to translate Leibnitz' own Latin, " the fountain of the nature and existence of all other things " (G., 7, p. 305). If once we admit that it is better for a good thing to exist than not (and the admission is so instinctive we scarcely notice how fundamental it is), the conclusion must follow, so Leibnitz felt, that in the very idea of a good thing there is a need, as it were, to become actual (cp. *in ipsa possibilitate vel essentia esse exigentiam existentiæ*, G., 7, p. 303). If it can be shown that there is no impossibility in the conception

of a boundless, self-complete Perfection— and Leibnitz thought this had been shown—he felt we must needs conceive it as pressing to actualize itself in time, and hence he looked on the temporal world as a continual progress of conscious or semi-conscious units to a realization and apprehension of It. Leibnitz, perhaps, is the first philosopher of note in whom the idea of progress is dominant, and the boldness and buoyancy of his thought form a fit prelude to the series of towering German systems. It is worth while remarking, by the way, that he was born just two years before the end of the Thirty Years' War. Germany, peaceful at last, had a chance of taking her rightful place in the culture of the West.

Leibnitz learnt from every philosopher of his time and of the times before him, and it is safe to say that no thinker after him but owes him a debt of some kind. It is easy, however, to pick holes in his system, and if his ideas were profound his emotions were shallow. There is something exasperating in the complacency with which he brushes aside the evils of the world as mere temporary set-backs in the " free and unending progress of the whole universe " towards perfection. Spinoza also, it may be said, swept evil aside, but the reader never feels exasperated with Spinoza : he divines that the Jew had bought his certainty with a great price.

CHAPTER XXXIV

THE STRENGTHENING OF CRITICISM IN FRANCE: VOLTAIRE

LEIBNITZ, the darling and the flatterer of princes and princesses, roused the scintillating wrath of Voltaire, that sworn foe of religious humbug in every form. "Candide," with its unsparing tales of human vice and natural calamity, is a memorable retort to the doctrine that this was the best of all possible worlds, and though Voltaire is not for a moment to be compared with Leibnitz in metaphysical power, the reader takes a grim pleasure in setting his witty indecent truth against the German's suave assurances. Always Voltaire is returning to the charge. He will picture himself lying, tortured by the stone, in a hospital filled to overflowing with the mutilated victims of "the last war, the hundred-thousandth war since wars were known. . . ." "I spoke to them of the countless crimes and disasters in this admirable world. The boldest among them, a German, explained that all this was a mere trifle. For example, he said, we should consider it a merciful dispensation of Providence that Tarquin violated Lucretia and Lucretia stabbed herself, because this led to the expulsion of the tyrants, and thus rape, suicide, and war laid the foundation of a Republic that brought happiness to the nations it conquered. I found it difficult to agree about the happiness. I did not see at first wherein lay the felicity for the Gauls and Spaniards, three million of whom, we are told, were slaughtered by Cæsar. Rapine and devastation I also thought exceedingly unpleasant, but my optimist would not budge; he kept on repeating, as

the jailer did to Don Carlos, ' Peace, peace, it is all for your good.' " (" Le Philosophe Ignorant.")

More fiercely, under the heading " Guerre " in the first short edition of his " Dictionnaire Philosophique," and with a fling at monarchy, " Famine, disease, and war are the three elements best known in this life of ours below. The first two are the gifts of Providence. But war, that unites all their benefits, comes to us from the active imagination of three or four hundred men scattered over the globe under the names of Kings and Ministers. Perhaps that is why in dedicatory epistles they are spoken of as the vicegerents of God."

Yet it would be a serious mistake to conceive Voltaire as consistently atheist, or anti-monarchist, or pacifist. He is not, one is tempted to say, consistently anything. Most stimulating of critics, we have him at his best when we take his irresistible attacks for what they are worth without forgetting that at another moment, provoked in another way, he will change front to lunge at an opposite danger. Against thorough-going scepticism, for example, he shows a genuine religious feeling of his own. He speaks for himself when he writes, " There is no need of portents for the belief in a righteous God to whom the heart of man lies open. The conviction lies deep enough in our nature." (" Dictionnaire Philosophique " under " Fraude.")

More consistent in his hatred of oppression and superstition than in anything else, he detested the Church because he saw in it the worst engine of tyranny, far worse than any political autocracy. " The most absurd of all despotisms," he writes, " the most insulting to human nature, the most illogical, the most disastrous, is the despotism of a priesthood ; and of all sacerdotal empires the Christian without doubt has been the most criminal." (" Idées Republicaines," Par un Citoyen de Genève, 1765.) It was against religious cruelty that he fought in his efforts, famous and triumphant, to save the family of the Huguenot Calas from further torture. Very characteristic of him is the pointed aside when admitting that the revolts of the Fronde were not marked by excessive cruelty, " They were not wars for religion."

When he pleads in the name of the peasants ground down by the forced labour and the endless taxes, "taille, taillon, capitation, double vingtième, ustensiles, droits de tout espèce, impôts sur tout ce qui sert à nos chetifs habillemens, et enfin la dîme à nos curés de tout ce qui la terre accorde à nos travaux," he does not proceed, as we should expect, to ask for any political reform, merely to secure for the peasants the right to work for themselves on Sundays and Saints' days and to be relieved from arbitrary rules about fasting.

His pages may flash with thrusts at the selfishness of kings: "Nations in Christian Monarchies have scarcely ever any interest in the wars of their Sovereigns. . . . The conquering people never gain from the booty of the conquered; they pay for everything." ("Siècle de Louis XIV.") He may frankly admire republican uprightness, "des vertus qu'on ne voit guère que dans les Républiques" (ib.). He may declare outright that "il n'y a que les rois qui préfèrent la royauté" ("Patrie," Dict. Ph.). But he draws back invariably when it comes to the question of actually changing the government. France, he admits openly, was under a despotism, and here he differs sharply from his predecessor Montesquieu, who had tried to insinuate a change by classing ostensibly her systems among monarchies that were, in fact, limited, and then taking every opportunity for praising such. Voltaire is franker. Why is he not more vigorous in assault? Why does he actually defend aristocrats and monarchs against the guarded criticism of Montesquieu? ("Commentaire sur l'Esprit des Lois.") Partly because he was dazzled, even he, one of the clearest-sighted men, within his range, who ever lived. Tradition and Prestige were potent even with him, and he weakens at the thought of *la gloire* under Louis XIV at the height of his power. "Victorieux depuis qu'il regnait, n'aïant assiegé aucune place qu'il n'eût prise, supérieur en tout genre à ses ennemis réunis, la terreur de l'Europe pendant six années de suite, enfin son Arbitre et son Pacificateur, ajoutant à ses Etats la Franche-Comté, Dunkerque et la moitié de la Flandre; et, ce qu'il devait compter pour le plus grand de ses avantages, Roi d'une

nation alors heureuse, et alors le modèle des autres nations." ("Siècle de Louis XIV.")

Not even the failure of Louis in the end, unable in the teeth of Englishmen, Dutchmen, and Germans to dominate Europe, could shake Voltaire's confidence. Writing his history of the reign, he writes of him, "Il fit voir qu'un Roi absolu qui veut le bien vient à bout de tout sans peine." We must remember that after all Louis had united the majority of Frenchmen, and that his patronage of art and literature was of a kind to enchant Voltaire. Voltaire's own taste was far from impeccable, as indeed we might guess from his own efforts at poetry. It was his considered opinion that in literature the Age of Louis rivalled the Age of Pericles, and the imposing symmetries of Versailles and the Louvre were far more to his mind than the grave appeal of Notre-Dame, a barbaric structure, he thought, for which Paris had to blush, when compared with Renaissance buildings.

In the second place, he had the vaguest ideas of economic laws, a defect he shared with most men of his time, though the bases of Economics were even then being discovered in England by Adam Smith. He conceives the foolish luxury of the rich as a real source of the poor man's wealth: "le pauvre y vit de svanités des grands." ("Defence du Mondain.")

Finally, and of most importance, Voltaire's keen insight into the follies and weaknesses of men checked any nascent faith in democracy. Although, especially when irritated by priestly groans over original sin, he could insist that men in the mass are not naturally bad (art. "Méchant"), but are only corrupted by evil example, he never gets away from the conviction that "they are very seldom fit to govern themselves" (art. "Patrie"). Similarly he sees no chance of securing wealth, or even subsistence, for the human race "unless there are an endless number of capable men who possess nothing whatever," "car certainement un homme à son aise ne quittera pas sa terre pour venir labourer la votre" (art. "Égalité"). A man of this temper could never give men a lead towards a new political system, however much his criticism might undermine the old. Voltaire's position was

rather to stimulate in detail the intellectual conscience of Europe, to send, as it were, electric thrills and shocks from one end of the intelligent world to the other.

And devotedly, unremittingly, he toiled at his task. He worked with the best minds of France at the " Encyclopédie " to popularize knowledge and rationalism. Early in his life he crossed to England, making friends everywhere in that land of age-long enemies, explaining to his countrymen Newton's discoveries, exalting Wren's architecture, delighting in, while smiling at, the Quaker simplicity with its marked contrast to the elaborate code of Parisian manners, lauding Penn's experiment of peaceful and fair dealing with the Red Indians in America. He wrote in friendship and grateful admiration to the Italian Beccaria then pleading earnestly for a more humane code of punishment. He reinforced with fervour Montesquieu's noble attack on the European crime of enslaving the negroes. (" Commentaire sur l'Esprit des Lois.") He went beyond Europe, turning the eyes of Europeans in reverence towards the wisdom of China and the East. He watched with real interest Russia's attempt, after centuries of slavery and stagnation under the Tartars and their sucesssors, at last to open her doors and learn from her kindred in the West. That the greater part of these efforts were only incited under the despotic rule of Peter the Great and Catherine did not disturb Voltaire. As we saw, he was ready enough to put up with despotism as a necessary evil. Much in the same spirit he maintained a friendship for years with Frederick the Great, then struggling, by fair means or foul, to raise his little kingdom from an ignorant ill-situated province into a strong, united, and cultured Power. There is no cause for surprise that the two men quarrelled in the end, both of them irritable and vain beyond the common. What is surprising and significant is their long co-operation.

CHAPTER XXXV

THE NEW CREED OF REFORM: ROUSSEAU

FOR the reasons indicated in the last chapter, Voltaire's critical rationalism, invaluable as it was and is, remained destructive rather than constructive. And the inspiration of the philosophers and men of science could only appeal to a few. It was from a little nation, but from a nation that had immemorial traditions of freedom, and from a city trained in self-government, that the call came which was to give the new age its distinctive creed of reform. The voice was the voice of an obscure watchmaker's son, French on the father's side, but penetrated by the influence of the Geneva that was later on—such are the paradoxes of reaction—to repudiate his works.

His temperament was a maze of contradictions. Jean Jacques Rousseau, morbidly sensual, craving, suspicious, treacherous, never, in spite of all, lost his admiration for what was simple, generous, and self-controlled. His sensitive genius, roused by the clash of thought in Paris, and by his own swift sense of the contrast between its hard self-centred life and the active ideals of citizenship and family love that he had left behind him, flung itself on the problems of Society and the State with a feverish ardour and indignation. His very weaknesses were of help to him here. Shelley was right when he made him say

> "If I have been extinguished, yet there rise
> A thousand beacons from the spark I bore."

Knowing his own need of self-discipline, yet sympathizing in

every fibre with the craving for personal freedom, longing for intimate union with men, yet turning with disgust from what men had so far made of the world, he could, and he did, feel with the whole force of his fervid nature that the only salvation for man lay in struggling to combine both impulses, the individualist and the social. That they could be combined was, he held, the glory of the ideal civic life: "The essence of the body politic lies in the harmony of obedience and liberty, the terms *subject* and *sovereign* representing two sides of one thing and the same, the thought of both being united in the single name of Citizen." [1] ("The Social Contract," Bk. III, c. 13.) And it is only in such a life that man could grow to his full stature. Thus, quite definitely, Rousseau sets out to combine the two principles that we have seen to be of such vital importance and so difficult of combination.

It is a serious misprision to imagine that his mature thought hankered after the condition of "the noble savage." True, he preferred it to the corrupt and decadent society he saw about him—and here historical research, at first hostile to Rousseau, has since, in many points, confirmed him—but that did not prevent him from recognizing the civil state as higher than the savage, because only in it could man acquire "moral freedom, which alone makes him the master of himself. For the impulse of mere appetite is slavery, while obedience to a self-ordained law is liberty." ("The Social Contract," Bk. I, c. 8.) Conscious reason taking the place of instinct marks the change in man from savagery to civil society, and the balance of gain is so large that "if the abuses of this new condition did not often degrade him below that from which he had risen, he ought to bless without ceasing the happy moment that tore him from it for ever, transformed him from a stupid and limited animal into a rational being, and made him into a man."

The words could scarcely be stronger, and we can understand from them alone how deeply Rousseau could influence a temperament so different from his own as Kant's. At the

[1] It was from Rousseau that the Revolutionists took their title of "*Citoyen*."

same time he never lost his sympathy—extravagantly expressed in his earlier writings—with the revolt from sophisticated over-civilization. The burden of his teaching was always just this, that if discipline is necessary for men, as it is, it must be a discipline that they themselves in the bottom of their hearts can recognize as just, and for that they must learn to make the laws as well as to obey them.

" L'homme est né libre," he wrote, as every one knows, at the beginning of " The Social Contract," " et partout il est dans les fers." But he does not stop there ; the precise business of his book, as the very same paragraph shows, is to ask and to answer what it is that justifies these chains. And the answer, in brief, is that their justification lies in the spirit of the Social Contract, conceived not as a supposed historical episode dead and done with—the question of historic fact is not for Rousseau vital—but as a living and growing factor, never ceasing to operate in all men's minds, *La Volonté Generale*, as he called it—the Social Conscience, as we might say, and not do violence to his thought—that sense, in short, of the common interest and the public welfare, which alone can fashion a State worth the having, and which, though it may be over-powered by other impulses, is in itself, just because it is the voice of the common reason seeking the common good, a thing " constant, unalterable, and pure." (Bk. IV, c. 1.)

This power must be kept active in men by exercise, trained to discuss, to elect worthy ministers, and in the last resort to decide. A strong executive need not infringe on the sovereignty of the people, if only the people do their duty in watching and guiding its general course. It used to be thought that Rousseau was chimerical in assigning so active a part in politics to the people, but recent experience has indicated that it is far more chimerical to hope for good government unless backed by an enlightened and vigorous public opinion. Thus by his detailed proposals, and still more by the principles underlying them, Rousseau appealed to the numberless critics, vocal and silent, who were bitterly dissatisfied with the old régime, but who were afraid to move

because they saw nothing to replace it. Rousseau cried to them, "Here, here in the public conscience, in man's latent sense of justice, is the basis that you need. Build on that; it will be a long task and a heavy, but just because you are men you have it in you to achieve it." He was only the more stimulating because he did not at all believe in Progress as an inevitable and, so to speak, mechanical law. What he did believe in was men's power to raise themselves into freedom if they chose. He did not minimize the dangers. Liberty made demands higher than the merely Factious could dream of. Nothing can be more scathing in his admirable letter on the government of Poland than his contempt for those "qui, les cœurs pleins de tous les vices des esclaves, s'imaginent que, pour être libres, il suffit d'être des mutins." Nor did he urge sudden and "revolutionary" methods.

In the same excellent letter to that unhappy land which had asked for his advice but was never allowed by her neighbours to act on it, he counselled her to advance cautiously, keeping what was good in her past traditions, keeping her monarchy elective, for example, but refusing to elect self-interested foreigners, restricting, but not at once destroying the *liberum veto*—that fatal right of any one member of the Diet to hold up even administrative measures by his single opposition—gradually, but only gradually, emancipating her serfs. Yet he knew that in class division lay her greatest evil, the division into "les nobles qui sont tout, les bourgeois qui sont rien, et les paysans qui sont moins que rien." Then, with a magnificent gesture, "Nobles Polonais, soyez plus, soyez hommes!" And again, after admitting fully the defects of the peasants, back to his fundamental theme, "Mais . . . songez que vos serfs sont des hommes comme vous, qu'ils ont en eux l'étoffe pour devenir tout ce que vous êtes." It was a call to rouse the dead, much more the surging half-repressed forces in France. True it is that there were elements in his writing calculated to arouse also both the anarchy and the oppression which he dreaded, but such defects ought not to blind us to the depth and value of his central thought. Burke, certainly not prejudiced in his favour,

did him no more than justice when he wrote during the Revolution: "I believe that were Rousseau alive, and in one of his lucid intervals, he would be shocked at the practical phrensy of his scholars who in their paradoxes are servile imitators." ("Reflections on the French Revolution.")

Rousseau, believing in the possibility of men governing themselves, was thus strongly opposed to Voltaire in spite of much common ground, and the belief overflowed into other spheres than the political. Rousseau is one of the first writers in modern Europe to urge in detail that education should aim at development from within. And his influence here spread in widening circles. Pestalozzi in Switzerland, training children to teach themselves in their play, followed directly on the lines of Rousseau. Educationalists in Germany like Herder and Jean Paul Richter acknowledged his lead, even as Kant and Schiller responded to his appeal for humanity and republican liberty, and Goethe to his double ideal of Romance and Law.

In his novel-writing and the extraordinary revelation of his "Confessions" he opened new paths for the literature of his period, ways for the direct expression of personal feeling. Intimate and emotional to the last degree, they are also morbidly sensual and charged with the sentimentality so constantly linked to sensualism, but they are alive with the vividness of his own mind and temperament. The Confessions will probably always be read with keen if painful interest, and the influence of his "Nouvelle Héloise," the theme divided characteristically between the ardours of physical passion and the duties of married life, was something prodigious in its day. But the influence of his political writings went far deeper and remains far more important. Of practical results he saw little during his lifetime. Dying in 1778, the very same year as Voltaire, he left the world more than a decade before the outbreak of the Revolution. But the watchwords of that gigantic uprising were drawn from him.

CHAPTER XXXVI

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY ENGLAND AND EXPANSION OVERSEAS

IN England the impression Rousseau made was naturally far less, in spite of the interest that made Hume invite him, and George III offer him a pension. Since the Restoration England had been growing more and more self-satisfied, and during the hundred years from the expulsion of James II (1689) to the opening of the French Revolution she was perhaps more serenely proud of herself than at any other period of her generally complacent career. For political prophets she had little use, as little as she had for ethereal poets. She counted herself to have attained. Locke's generous "Essays on Civil Government" come at the close of the seventeenth century. Until the time of Burke there is no advance on their political wisdom; and Burke, alarmed by revolution, is actually and in many ways less broad-minded than Locke.

In poetry the wild songs and the solemn both fall silent. Milton, Donne, Herrick, Crashaw, Vaughan, Bunyan, are all of an earlier age. Such satirists as Gay and Pope, like Congreve earlier, and the greater Dryden earlier still, are obviously not the least perturbed by the evils they flick so neatly. The sharp reaction from Puritanism had left a distinct dislike for fervour. Literature was in essence prose, subtle often and often strong, but as a rule undeniably smug. Yet the bitter suffering anger of Swift is a startling and perhaps a significant exception. Nor should we forget the lifelong evangelical mission of John Wesley (b. 1703, d. 1791), though his appeal scarcely touched

the cultured classes. And as the century advances there is a perceptible warning of emotion in the world of letters, not, however, kindling until much nearer the close into anything like "enthusiasm," a term indeed of opprobrium at the time. But the strong humanity of Johnson and the kindliness to be felt in the diverse (and often indecent) work of Fielding and Sterne, the lesser Smollett, and the "respectable" Richardson are notably different from the arid brilliance that had just preceded them. These men are interested enough in human beings to create types that are far more than mere butts for mockery. Inaugurators of the modern novel, they brought back imagination into the market-place, and it is ill done ever to be ungrateful, even if we feel that they have never visited the high lands of poetry and that too often their wares are fly-blown.

The other arts show much the same characteristics: a sound sense of proportion, an assured ease and dignity, but little to expand the higher faculties of the imagination. There are exceptions again here: if the stately genius of Christopher Wren belongs rather to the age of Milton, the eighteenth century has full right to the grave gracious harmonies of Gainsborough, one of England's few real painters. In Gainsborough's dignity and quiet subtlety there is something that suggests an English Velazquez, though he has none of the Spaniard's suppressed fire. Reynolds, though the lesser man, must always be coupled with Gainsborough, and Hogarth earlier offers a parallel to Smollett that is exact almost to absurdity.

In philosophy Berkeley and Hume make their mark in criticism, as we shall note in a later chapter, and at the close of the period Gibbon opens a new era in history, the era of unprejudiced penetrating inquiry into the long-buried past. Both Hume and Gibbon show a freedom from prejudice and a readiness to dispense with what they would have called "the consolations of religion," which indicate how markedly the scientific spirit and the rationalist were changing the orientation of men's minds. Thought was pointing now in a direction almost exactly opposed to that of mediævalism, towards the study of this world simply for what it is and can

be made in itself, turning aside from the problems of another or of the universe as a whole as from riddles felt to be insoluble. The attitude has much in common with later Agnosticism and Positivism, in short with all those systems, typically modern, that admit ignorance of fundamental truths and content themselves with the steady exercise of man's own mind and will.

England's genius for action, moreover, was in full evidence. During the struggle with Louis XIV she had set foot in India, and as the century advanced she established the basis of her dominion there, laid broader the foundations of her colonies, and expanded her sea-power. The eighteenth century is eminent for the expansion of Western Europe over the savage and backward countries of the world, and England was foremost in the adventure. There was little sense that Europe owed a duty to these countries with whose liberties she gratuitously interfered, still less that a new and larger unity was possible between them and the West. Still, there were signs of a broader view. Mistakes and crimes enough England committed, but there was a leaven of criticism, sound and humane, that kept her from the worst faults of the Spaniards. Burke's indictment of Warren Hastings for extortion and cruelty against the Indians, the protests of the Quakers against slavery, are noteworthy instances.

But the general attitude to the colonies was still that of the European world at large. Colonies were plantations for the exclusive benefit of the home country. In the case of America a deliberate attempt at taxation without representation roused a spirit of indomitable revolt, as was indeed foreseen, but in vain, by two at least of England's statesmen, Chatham and Burke. These men knew that a young and virile nation, founded by men who had left the Old World for freedom, would not tolerate claims such as their forefathers had given up everything to avoid. Chatham and Burke, however, pleaded to no effect, at least for the time. Concession was refused and America lost to us. But we learnt from the loss. Chatham's son, the younger Pitt, was able to

inaugurate a more liberal policy. Commercial considerations helped him. It became increasingly clear to "a nation of shopkeepers" that more was to be gained in the long-run by allowing young communities to trade freely to their own best advantage and thus to furnish a richer market for our wares than to pinch them into comparative uselessness by limiting their traffic to the little islands of the mother-country. Others beside ourselves learnt from America's revolt and in other ways. Her triumphant Declaration of Independence (1776), echoing the Dutch proclamation nearly two centuries before, was to France an example in action of what Rousseau had been in theory. It was the call to Republican liberty.

Moreover, America set up on a large scale the notable experiment of Federation. This indeed had been tried already in Europe, but never with any persistency except in areas too limited to show its possibilities. Rousseau in one of his pregnant asides had actually spoken of it as perhaps the best form of government, combining the advantages of large States and small (and we may add making room for a new combination of freedom and unity). But it was a daring thing to put in practice on the American scale and a difficult thing, even to a people trained in representative government. The way was thick with problems, many of them never solved until that convulsion of civil war which cast out slavery. Whatever the difficulties, however, the success from the outset was greater, and the Federal principle has won its way steadily to fuller and fuller acceptance by the Western world. Perhaps in establishing it as a prime factor in government America may prove to have given as potent a stimulus to the progress of Europe as in her defiant assertion of all men's natural rights to "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." More and more in recent years, for example, the British Commonwealth has adopted the principle and always with success. Though the problems of Ireland, Egypt, and India are not yet solved, there are signs that the solution will be along these lines. And it is noteworthy that in the last thirty years as the prospects of self-government have progressed in Ireland there has been an output of distinctively Irish

literature unparalleled since the early days of the sagamen. Most hopeful sign of all, the world as a whole is turning to the Federal principle embodied in a universal League as the one remedy for recurrent war and insensate competition between nations.

CHAPTER XXXVII

GERMANY AND MUSIC

MEANWHILE in Germany and all through the eighteenth century, what is perhaps the most wonderful of all the arts, the art of music, had been exploring undreamt-of heights and depths. Music offers the most striking instance of the value in Art pure and simple, being, undeniably and obviously, neither utilitarian nor imitative, neither serving physical comfort, nor giving definite information, nor, except indirectly and rarely, mimicking natural events. Free of the world, it yet moves the world, lifting the emotions of man above himself, and leading him, as it were, into a place which he feels to be more fundamental than the place of appearance and at the same time intimately bound to it. For music works, like all arts, out of the very stuff of things manifest to the senses, at home, though none can explain how, among the mysteries of Time and Space that are so bewildering to the intellect, the stones of its magical building being no more and no less than the effects on the human ear of vibrations that combine with and follow each other. But out of these it makes something new.

The rise of music belongs in the main to the mediæval world and the modern. From the dawn of history, no doubt, music of a kind was known, and the song of the birds suggests a further origin. Simple folk-tunes almost everywhere show a genuine beauty. But it is a beauty like the beauty of a bird-song or a ballad, one melody of single successive notes. In mediæval

times, by steps we cannot now fully trace, there grew up the conception of harmony as distinct from melody, a richer effect being gained by concurrent notes, differing from but harmonizing with each other. It was essential for the notes to differ, but at first the differences were carefully limited, all harshness, unless obviously transitory, being avoided. This serene effect was consecrated by the ideal of church music as of something uplifted beyond the discords of earth. But towards the close of the sixteenth century the desire made itself felt for something closer to the stress of human life. The Italians, as we have suggested above, seem to have led the way here, Monteverde (1567–1643), a successor of Palestrina, being the first, according to Professor Tovey, "to make deliberate use of unprepared dissonances."

But the real strides were made in Germany as the seventeenth century passed into the eighteenth, when the country was at last, comparatively speaking, at peace from foreign wars and internal strife. It is one of the many unexplained paradoxes in history, but a reassuring one, that during the early eighteenth century, an age, as we have seen, pre-eminently of prose, this art, the least prosaic of all, should have come into its kingdom. And while its affinities with free architecture seem particularly close, both depending in a high degree on clear and complex structure—"architecture is frozen music"—music found its path of development exactly when architecture was dying. There is no name of the first rank in architecture after Christopher Wren. The palaces of music are built instead.

And they are built especially by Germans, men who for other arts have shown little aptitude. What Germany has given to the world in music may fairly be counted compensation enough. Bach, living and working in Germany (1685–1750), Handel, born either the same year or the year before, but resident during most of his life in England, opened new and endless vistas. Of the two Bach is undoubtedly the grander genius. But he is also far more difficult. Handel is better known to the English public than any other leading composer, partly through his simplicity and partly through the

happy chance of his residence here. His familiarity with the English Bible gave him the opportunity of choosing its glorious language for his "Messiah." The appeal of that work is at once to the sense of music, of literature, and of religion, and this composite character, aided by the pellucid clearness of its themes and structure, has made it readily accessible to the multitude. And that by no unworthy means. It is one of the few masterpieces that are easy for the tyro to grasp on a first acquaintance.

Bach, however, is far richer, as well as stronger. He has more human pathos than any musician except Beethoven, but he has also, and always, access to remote places where sorrow and personality alike seem swallowed up in something quite other than human. Goethe speaks of his music suggesting "the eternal harmonies at play on the breast of God, before ever the world was made." That is exactly the impression given again and again as of something free from all created forms we know of, yet out of which creation could rise. There is a peculiar quality in his work that seems to liberate us from the cark and care of humanity even more completely than the touch of Nature herself. He is, moreover, one of the most controlled of ardent geniuses, and to this rare combination much of his restorative and sanative power is due. There are fugues of his fresher than the morning, just as there are others more massive than the everlasting hills or fuller of rushing force than the sea. And there are others gentle as the pipes of shepherds in Arcady, and others again wistful and mysterious beyond words. Always the web of his design is so close and firm that it is impossible to misplace a note without obviously marring the texture, and the solidity that comes from his perfect form is so strong that single notes will give on occasion as monumental an effect as chords. In his stupendous production, the Mass in B minor, the most majestic religious work in the world, everything in the universe seems to combine together, the effort and longing of man linked to cosmic processes, the Christian tragedy a symbol of all heroic suffering, the Christian resurrection a rising-up of all life, the triple waves of the "Sanctus" an ocean of

unfathomable blessedness. "The morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy."

It may be admitted that Bach is chary of, possibly unfertile in, delightful melodies. He is undeniably austere, and there are few of his themes that any one would be tempted to whistle. And again he has not the kind of temper that would make him write glowing songs of love. Mozart gives us more enchanting tunes, Beethoven a more burning flood of passion.

Mozart, born a wonder-child and dying in the bloom of early manhood, though he never possessed the massive power of Bach, was master of a form as perfect, and in his sentiment there is a clarity, gaiety, and tenderness that make it easy to understand how Goethe wished that he, of all musicians, could write the songs for the scenes in the second part of "Faust," where the young Euphorion, child of Romance and Classicism, demands all the loveliness of the world. Nor is Mozart, any more than other great artists, aloof from the vital forces of his time. His "Magic Flute" is a joyful and solemn glorification of the spirits that make for liberty and peace and oppose obscurantism and despotism; while the sunny music of his "Figaro" accompanied the satire of Beaumarchais that preluded the Revolution.

Beethoven (1770–1827), the fiery enthusiast for Republicanism, is perhaps of all masters the one who gives the most overpowering effect of Man the Titan, the Titan who has it in him to become a God, whether toiling to heave a dead-lift weight against the thunderous blows of Destiny, as in the first movement of the C Minor Symphony, or exultant among the armies that ride through the heavens at the close, or hurrying through a lifetime of restless activity as in the Sonata Appassionata until the sheer force in him tears a passage through the skies, or confronting the magnificence of the universe with a pride equal to its own, as in the Emperor Concerto, or rollicking among the elements as in the last movement of the Seventh Symphony. And always and ever, wrought into the fabric, there is Beethoven's ineffable lovingness and solemnity, suffering constantly, but with a

sense of greatness in the suffering at which the music itself seems to marvel.

In the final phase, while the suffering does not lessen, an unearthly beauty, laughter, and wildness enter into the music as though the composer, old, deaf, buffeted by Fate and the ingratitude of men, had apprehended a sphere of existence entirely new, with new glories and new terrors. To some extent this may be noted in other geniuses, in Shakespeare, for example, with Caliban and Ariel and his hints of " untried waters, unpath'd shores," but it has never been so marked as in Beethoven. It is most obvious in his later Quartets, but it is to be felt also in his later piano sonatas, particularly in the last of all, where the Adagio seems, like the Paradise of the Italian poet, at once as full of peace as a placid sea is full of ripples and vivid with " carolling flames." Nor did the breadth of his humanity lessen because of his entry into the aerial places. In the last and greatest of his symphonies, crowned by the Hymn to Joy that he had always meant to write and did write when every external joy had failed him, the final theme chosen does not recall the individual tortured heart, nor yet the ecstasy that is freed from earth, nor yet the swan-song of love at the gates of death ; it is rather the voice of life mature and glad, rejoicing to embrace the whole world of men in a brotherhood of action. So again in the Thirty-three Diabelli Variations (Op. 136), after all the abysmal experiences, the tumult, the agony, the mystery, the terrible and elfin messengers, the whisperers of comfort, we are led into a sturdy fugue, self-controlled and resolute, advancing more and more insistently until it quickens into a triumphant ride straight for the crash of doom and so to the lifting of the Song into the airs of childhood and Paradise.

After Beethoven and all through the nineteenth century music has shown no signs of failing. No one indeed has achieved so much and so perfectly as these earlier men, but what a wealth is suggested by the mere names of Schubert, Schumann, Wagner, Brahms, Strauss ! Beethoven with all his range could not write supremely well for the voice, and his one opera is not counted among his masterpieces. But

there have never been greater song-makers than Schubert, Schumann, and Brahms, while Wagner and Strauss have discovered a new world in opera, fusing drama with pure music in a manner that, with whatever failings and aberrations, does on occasion produce unparalleled effects.

Shortly after the first bloom of music in Germany, and often stimulated by it, the music of the Slav nations quickened into life. The closing years of the eighteenth century saw the emergence of Chopin's fairy poetry and chivalric romance, the nineteenth century saw stronger growths in definitely Russian work, and Scriabin, who promised to overtop all his compatriots, has only just been taken from us.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

GERMANY AND PHILOSOPHY: KANT, HEGEL, AND MODERN THOUGHT

THE second outstanding achievement of Germany during the latter half of the eighteenth century and the opening of the nineteenth was again in the realm of philosophy. And here it is interesting to note that the advance after Leibnitz was stimulated by a foreigner, Hume the Englishman. England, though she has never distinguished herself by original constructions in philosophy, has shown penetration and sagacity in criticism, and Hume, influenced himself by French scepticism, pushed the critical inquiry into the bases of knowledge with a daring and acumen that, as Kant said afterwards, awakened him from his "dogmatic slumber." Berkeley, as Hume recognized ("Concerning Human Understanding," Part I, § xii.), had familiarized English readers with the theory that all our sensations and impressions could never really be known to correspond, or, as Berkeley writes in his "Principles" (§ 86), "to be conformable" with any unperceivable counterpart in external objects. Here, as Fraser observes in his note on the passage, Berkeley touched on one of the greatest difficulties in any theory that takes knowledge to be merely a copy of something that exists entirely outside mind and is entirely different from mind. For how can we ever know that such a copy is correct? How can the mind get outside itself and its sensations so as to compare the copy with the wholly external reality? On the other hand the question faces us—If there is no corresponding reality at all, have we any more right to talk of a

knowledge beyond ourself? Can we give the name of true knowledge to what depends wholly and solely on our own sensation? How can the stuff of that be better than a dream?

Berkeley evaded the difficulty by assuming that our sensations, those, for example of sight, were, so to speak, a divine symbolism, "a visual language" by which God made known to us His ideas.

But an hypothesis of this type could not satisfy the robust positive spirit of Hume's Inquiry: "As to those impressions, which arise from the senses, their ultimate cause is, in my opinion, perfectly inexplicable by human reason, and 'twill always be impossible to decide with certainty whether they arise immediately from the object, or are produced by the creative power of the mind, or are derived from the author of our being."

And Hume went even further. He took up again such questions as those of Cause and such problems as those suggested by the infinite divisibilities that seem involved in our conceptions of Space and Time. He subjected them to a relentless attack. As regards natural causes he asked, and he pressed the question, what logical right can we have, from the mere fact of two events having often been conjoined, to infer that they will always, unless a third should intervene, be so conjoined again? We have no right at all, he answered. Nothing but custom makes us believe that there is any *necessary connexion* between what we designate as natural cause and what we designate as natural effect. ("An Inquiry concerning Human Understanding," § vii., Part ii.). And yet he saw very plainly that to admit this without qualification was to shake the whole fabric of scientific knowledge. "For surely if there be any relation among objects which it imports to us to know perfectly, it is that of cause and effect. On this are founded all our reasonings concerning matter of fact or existence." So again, while recognizing that the conceptions of quantity and number were essential for certain grades of precise thought, Hume emphasized the bewildering paradoxes to which they led. "A real quantity infinitely less than any

finite quantity containing quantities less than itself, and so on *in infinitum*: this is an edifice so bold and prodigious that it is too mighty for any pretended demonstration to support because it shocks the clearest and most natural principles of human reason. But what renders the matter more extraordinary is that these seemingly absurd opinions are supported by a chain of reasoning, the clearest and most rational; nor is it possible for us to allow the premises without admitting the consequences." ("Inquiry," § xii., Part ii.)

The upshot of the whole matter was for Hume a profound distrust on every side, "Reason," in his own words, being "thrown into a kind of amazement and suspense," with an inexpugnable "diffidence of herself and of the ground on which she treads."

The results of Hume's uncompromising doubt, provoking as it did the original force of German thinkers, have not yet ceased to operate. Kant's remarkable system, as already indicated, arose from brooding over it. Kant showed in the first place that such conceptions as Hume criticized, e.g. those of quantity, cause, time, and space, were interwoven far more deeply than Hume realized into the very texture of our simplest experience, that without them, or something involved in them, there could be for us no human experience, no ordered world, at all, nothing but a formless chaos of sensation which we could not realize distinctly enough even to call a chaos. Further, Kant showed that these conceptions were the work of *thought* as distinct from mere *sensation*, or, as Kant called it, *perception*. The two together, thought and perception, were necessary for our rational experience. Neither alone would do. The mere impression of light, for example, if we could not so much as think to ourselves, "This is an impression of light and somehow caused by something," would leave us little better than vegetables. On the other hand, mere general conceptions of cause and existence with no sensations or memories to fill them would be barren and featureless. "Percepts without concepts are blind; concepts without percepts are empty" ("Critique of Pure Reason"). The conceptional element, being the work of Thought, Kant held

to be contributed by the human mind; the stimulus of Sensation, not being dependent on our will, to come from the outside world. And since order-giving conceptions were involved in all human experience, it followed for Kant that it was possible for us in some degree to predict rationally what our experience would be: it would, for example, be bound to conform to the conception of consistency. In this sense we could lay claim to knowledge.

On the other hand Kant, in his critical analysis, influenced by his predecessors, showed a deeply sceptical side. In the first place, such difficulties as those in the current conceptions of Cause and Time and Space, touched upon by Hume, were felt still more keenly by his own more penetrating intellect, and he faced the conclusion that these conceptions of ours led to such odd results that they could not be accepted as giving us the real truth of things. Moreover, though the stimulus to sensation came to us from the outside world, yet sensation itself as such he held to be a matter of human feeling, and it was impossible to conclude that it existed in the "thing itself" apart from our impressions. Therefore this "thing in itself," *das Ding an Sich*, remained for Kant (so far as a purely intellectual analysis could take him) a thing in the last resort unknowable.

But there is still another side to the matter. When Kant attacked the problem from other standpoints, from that of the practical life, for example, or the artist's love of beauty, he found himself led to other considerations. The moral impulse, he considered, bore witness to a sense of duty as a command over and above the individual will of man: it impelled him to something that he reverenced whether it harmonized with his personal inclination or not. There are passages in his writings here that reveal the countryman of Eckhard and the Theologia Germanica. This moral command of the inner voice, this "Categorical Imperative," pointed out to Kant that he should never treat another man as a means merely, but always as an End in Himself, and indicated that the only thing ultimately worth striving for was a universal kingdom where all these Ends could be found

subsisting in harmony. But that Kingdom obviously was impossible under earthly conditions. Therefore in practical life a man had to postulate a Will of God as above his own will and an Immortality for the attainment of his goal. He had to act, whatever his intellectual criticism, as though he possessed this transcendent knowledge about the world beyond himself. Again, the beauty in things—so Kant suggested, and the suggestion goes deep—indicated a harmony between every least particular of sensation and our own mind, a harmony which we cannot in the least explain by the ordinary concepts of our understanding, and which points to the conclusion that Nature, even in her transitory phenomena, shows a spirit profoundly akin to our own, and promises a satisfaction deeper than any we can at present comprehend. Beauty and its problems "compel us, whether we like it or not, to look beyond the horizon of the sensible." ("Critique of Judgment," § 57.)

Thus Kant's edifice of philosophic doubt was, so to speak, shown by himself not to be impregnable, and the outburst of optimistic speculation that followed attacked it also from the purely intellectual side. Hegel, obscure and inspiring, is here the dominant name, but there were many workers in the field. Kant himself had emphasized the power of thought, and younger men, learning from him, were eager to go beyond him. Sensation alone, they admitted, might not be able to lead us further than our self, but was not Thought able? Had not Descartes and others shown how it was impossible for a thinking man to deny that the sum-total of Reality existed, whatever that Reality might turn out to be? Was it not equally clear that a thing radically incoherent could not exist? Might it not be possible to think out what must be logically involved in a coherent Reality? If we could do this, avoiding all inconsistencies and accepting as only relatively true what was only relatively coherent and complete, should we not then be within our rights in claiming that the inner nature of existence was no longer closed to us? Hegel at least thought the task achievable. "The Gates of Thought are stronger than the Gates of Hell." "Man, since he is

Spirit, cannot think greatly enough of the greatness and strength of his own mind, and, in this faith, he will find nothing so hard and unyielding that it will not open before him. The nature of the universe, hidden and barred from him at first, has no power to withstand the assaults of science : it must unclose and lay bare the depths of its riches before him, ready for his enjoyment." ("Hist. of Phil.," Introd., B. 2.)

Contradictions and inconsistencies in human thought were not for Hegel insuperable barriers. On the contrary, if we were only patient and penetrating enough, they themselves gave us the hint which showed us how to solve them. Such inadequacies as those in mathematical conceptions or in the ideas of natural cause, emphasized by Leibnitz and Hume and re-emphasized by Kant, led Hegel to the conclusion, not that things could never be fully known, but that they could never be fully known by such imperfect means. Current mathematical ideas, for example, valid within their range, were only true for certain aspects of things, and if we applied them to things as a whole they broke down. The only conception that could prove coherent for a complete universe was that of spirits united through their knowledge of each other in a state of existence far above the limitations of time as time appears to man. Conceived under the form of time, this was the state to which all things were tending ; conceived under the true form of eternity, this was what the universe really was. Hegel's system has stood fire for a century, and there would be few now to maintain the validity of all the complex inferences he considered himself to have established from less adequate to more adequate conceptions. But, apart from details, his general view is extraordinarily stimulating, and amid the heavy obscurity of his ordinary style there flash out memorable utterances.

Since his day, the day *par excellence* of brilliant system-makers, the courses of philosophy have shown three main elements. There is the tendency to uphold the work of Kant, and Kant at his most critical, to admit that the ultimate basis of our knowledge is ignorance, and the ultimate nature of things essentially unknowable ; to be content with recogniz-

ing a certain order among our perceptions and with forecasting those in the future, much as Plato's cave-men, gazing at the shadows on the wall, guessed what figure would succeed figure, and often guessed rightly, but never asked what the real thoughts might be of the beings who cast the shadows. Those who extol natural science at the expense of philosophy belong to this group. So also, but without altogether despising philosophy, do the chief followers of Comte and Herbert Spencer.

Others, working on lines more or less idealistic and often Hegelian, lay repeated stress on the activity of thought. They ask, for example, if the very fact of mathematical deductions corresponding with experiences not known when the deductions were made, as for example the calculations of Leverrier foretold the appearance of Neptune, does not indicate that Thought is active in the universe as well as in man and that man can spell out at least some of its arguments. Similarly with Beauty. Men can appreciate natural beauty, and all such appreciation is in a sense constructive. But what man can believe that in the full sense he constructs the whole of natural beauty? Is it not after all a soberer hypothesis to imagine that a Spirit of Beauty is working beyond himself with which he can communicate, as mind can meet with mind? Again, while it is practically impossible to suppose that all perceptions as such exist apart from the possibility of a perceiver, that the smallness of a man, for example, seen at a hundred yards distance, and the bigness of him seen at close quarters, can both exist apart from any possible onlooker, the same difficulty does not occur in supposing that the man himself as a conscious unit has a life of his own distinct from the observer's. Consciousness of some kind, that is, can be conceived to exist on its own account in a manner impossible to mere sensations. It is not things as perceived but things in some sense as perceiving that we should take as fundamental. In this connexion the speculations of Leibnitz about degrees of consciousness have been renewed, and reinforced by modern theories of the *sub*conscious as distinct from the *un*conscious.

Thirdly, there are stalwart thinkers who cannot be classified as belonging to any one group, but who, resenting the vagueness of much system-making, especially the idealistic, are concerned above all to clarify our conceptions piece by piece, accepting nothing that cannot be rigidly demonstrated. Notable here is the work done in applied mathematics, and in particular the speculation led by Einstein. And finally, on the opposite wing have stood the poetic sages, brooding too deeply over man's destiny to be called mere singers or rhetoricians, but certainly not systematic philosophers.

CHAPTER XXXIX

GOETHE

OF such was Wolfgang von Goethe, friend of Hegel and Beethoven, but neither metaphysician nor musician, only one of the most universally-minded men that Europe ever produced. His long and crowded life links the pre-Revolutionary epoch to our own times. Born in 1749, just before the turn of the century and while Voltaire and Rousseau were still in middle life, he lived to be the revered teacher of the young Carlyle, to admire and mourn over Byron, and to welcome Victor Hugo. Dying in 1832, the year of our Reform Bill, he left behind him nearly seventy years of superb and varied work.

His youth fell at a time when Germany was beginning to appreciate to the full both the general inheritance of European culture and her own power of making an original contribution to it. For Germany it was a Renaissance more real than any she had known in the sixteenth century. The passion for classicism, the love of Nature, the zeal for truth were in the air, and Goethe was of all men the man to serve their ends. More profoundly than any leader of the Italian Renaissance, he combined throughout his life the enthusiasms for art and for science, and in art itself he had striven to unite the Romantic and the Classic, the fullest expression of the individual's personal longings with the high, impersonal calm that has lost itself in its object. Nor to him was it foolishness to attempt a harmony between the Pagan ideal and the Christian, self-expression through triumphant activity with the self-sacrificing discipline that could reverence the lowest and weakest of mankind.

Blessed and cursed with a temperament inflammable and restless as that of his own Werther, he worked his way forward to a belief in self-control and constancy as the only clues in the labyrinth of love. Like many strong men, he had always in him a marked vein of egotism, but it was balanced by a singular sweetness and generosity, and his aim at least was never egotistic. That aim he served faithfully and never conceived narrowly. He gave years of his life to arduous administrative routine at Weimar—routine which, though in the end it broadened, often for the time hampered his poetic production. "I can't go on with Iphigenia," he wrote to Frau v. Stein. "The King of Tauris has to speak as though there were no starving weavers in Apolda."

His distrust of all political upheaval made him look askance at the French Revolution, but no man ever desired more earnestly than he the full development of all men. "Mankind is only made by all men," he wrote in so many words, "Nur alle Menschen zusammen machen die Menschheit aus, nur alle Kräfte zusammen genommen die Welt." Endless glories lie latent in man and must be developed, "only not in one man, but in many" ("Wilhelm Meister"). The crowning work of his "Faust" is actually to drain the marshes for a land where millions of men may lead the good life in common. Undemocratic as he counted himself, he gave a better lead to democracy than many professed democrats. Nor did this fellow-feeling stop short with his own nation; it overflowed bounteously into the life of the whole world. "There is a plane," he said to Eckermann, "where, in a sense, we rise above the nations, and there the joys and sorrows of another people become to us as our own." On that plane Goethe lived.

The dramatic poem of "Faust," long, difficult, defective, and magnificent, that he carried in his heart for over sixty years, remains his most representative work, a storehouse of his most intimate secrets, as he himself admitted. The turn he gives to the old legend is characteristically modern. Faust still tries to sell his soul, wearied with the slow steps of science, for a short and easy way into all the fullness of experience, but Goethe, unlike the mediævalist and the Puritan, finds

in that very attempt, charged with peril though it is, the seed of Good. For man is made essentially to desire the absolute Good, which is not merely his private good, and if he will only go on testing all things he will somehow find it :

> " A true man, struggling in the dark and blinded,
> Still knows the way that leads him home at last."

So Jehovah declares at the opening.

> " The soul that still has strength to strive
> We have the strength to free."

So the Angels chant at the close.

Thus Mephistopheles, the Satan of this modern Paradise Lost and Regained, the asserter of the Self in its narrowest form, the form that refuses suffering, cannot really make Faust his prisoner for ever, because the Self in the man being stimulated, he cannot help desiring more than himself. Mephistopheles, half conscious of this, has to admit that his own power is a fragment of the Force

> " That wills the evil and yet works the good."
> (" *ein Teil von jener Kraft*
> *Die stets das Böse meint und stets das Gute schafft.*")

The power to suffer and to admire never deserts Faust, and therefore he can never be satisfied with the tiny closed circle of the devil's false " satisfaction." Even when on the point of rejecting all scientific search in despair, he can behold the vision of the Earth-Spirit overpowering his puny self, and hear its fire-song, the song which, once heard, haunts every student of science who has in him also any touch of poetry or religion :

" In the storm of action, the floods of life,
I surge and sway,
Above and below,
Further, nigher,
To and fro !
Birth and death, an infinite sea,
A web that changes eternally,
A living fire !
I work at the loom of Time, I smite with the weaver's rod,
In the whirr and the roar I fashion the living garment of God."

So again even after Faust has sealed his wager with the devil, promising his soul if Mephistopheles can satisfy him, even when he is on the point of seducing Margaret, the divine element in his passion can still pour itself out in his confession of faith, Goethe's own creed, one suspicious of dogma but confident in the response of a man's heart to the splendour of life and the universe :

> " Who dare name His name
> And say, I believe in Him ?
> Who dare silence the heart
> And say, I believe Him not ?
> The All-upholder,
> The All-enfolder,
> Does He not hold, enfold
> You and me and Himself ?
> Is not the sky overhead
> And the firm-set world at our feet ?
> Do not the great stars move
> Through the infinite vault above
> And look down with immortal love ?
> And I look into your eyes ?
> Does not the glory press
> Into your heart and brain,
> And the open eternal secret float
> All round you, hidden and plain ? "

So, once more, Faust can speak for Goethe's own devout joy in his scientific belief that all forms of life are akin, a conviction he held in common with other notable men of the time, foreshadowing the more detailed theory of evolution that marks the nineteenth century. Goethe's emotion in discovering the inter-maxillary bone in man, a discovery indicating that the human frame was built on the same lines as that of other vertebrates, his excitement in the garden at Palermo over the conception that all plants conformed to the same general type, are reflected in Faust's hymn of thanks to Nature for having opened her secrets to him :

> " Bringing the ranks of all thy living creatures
> Before my sight and teaching me to know
> My brothers in the quiet forest ways,
> The airs, the waters."

It is exactly part of Goethe's plan to conceive the Faust who is capable of this impassioned insight as also the Faust who seduces Margaret against her conscience, leaves her in despair, and returns in remorse too late to save her from the law's vengeance for the drowning of their child in her madness. His Faust was to exhibit both the weakness and the strength of the personal desire for life. As the drama develops through its scenes of pity and terror Faust, though too weak to save his soul by a supreme effort of self-denial, as Margaret saves hers when she chooses the scaffold rather than palter with Mephistopheles, is yet strong enough to take up the struggle of life after the tragedy and make his Future retrieve his Past.

The Second Part, too often neglected by English readers, is necessary for the full understanding of Goethe's outlook on human existence.

There Faust discovers that a worthy conception of life can only be attained through the help of Greece and the Greek vision of a harmony between spirit and sense, guarded by valiant defenders, itself at rest among a happy people and a beautiful. The winning of Helen by Faust is no longer conceived, as it was in the old legend, to be a mere triumph of voluptuous ecstasy: it is the grasp on the Hellenic ideal itself. Warriors watch over the union of Faust and Helen, but they themselves have escaped from war, and making the right use of Time they seem to have discovered Eternity. Faust sings his own Epithalamion with the spirit of Hellas, lovely and deathless for ever:

"Here happiness through every generation
Smiles from glad faces and can never cease,
Each is immortal in his age and station,
And sane and joyous are they, and at peace.

"Even so among the shepherds stood Apollo,
Like him they seemed, like his the fairest face,
For where pure Nature leads and men dare follow
All worlds can meet together and embrace.

"No palace prison thee, no fortress capture!
The world's youth flows eternal, fresh and free!
For us, for us, and our own secret rapture,
In Sparta's neighbourhood lies Arcady!"

But the vision has no sooner been grasped than something is born of it that insists on making its way into the turmoil of the actual world. It is Euphorion, son of Faust and Helen, impatient and heroic, who calls for the action that breaks the dream, and fulfils it. Fulfils it, that is, so far as it can be fulfilled in Time and by imperfect mortals. It is of the essence of the ideal, Goethe always insisted, to actualize itself, yet it can never do so completely. The vision fades, while it leaves enough light to live by. Faust must hold fast to Helen's mantle as she sinks back to the world of dreams:

> "It is not the divinity that's gone,
> Divine it is. Up! use the priceless gift;
> Use it and rise! For it will carry you
> Through the clear sky, above the dim and vile,
> So long as you endure."

The closing scenes are the test of Faust's endurance. Inspired by the memory alike of Margaret and of Hellas he sets himself to a real work of statesmanship, reclaiming from the lawless ocean the land where he may build up a home for the Hellenic ideal on the larger scale of the modern world.

But the sin besetting all his desires, the craving for sheer personal dominance that had poisoned his love and made him desert the toilsome ways of science, reappears in the politician's lust for power. It is another form of the primal curse on men and on nations, a curse that clings perhaps most closely to men and nations of the West with their ever-insurgent ambitions. An independent old couple in their cottage resist the high-handed colonizing schemes of this enlightened Empire-maker. He sweeps them impatiently aside and his servant Mephistopheles burns the house over their heads. Faust's cry of remorse that this is not what he had meant is the cry repeated again and again by the conscience of history, before Goethe's day and more than once since. It brings Faust face to face with the black element in his nature. By a desperate effort he wrenches himself from the clutch of Mephistopheles, makes head against the spirit of restless dissatisfaction, his old enemy, a demon-woman lurking in dry places and hunting

her victims into despair or crime. It is significant that Goethe does not make him give up his enterprise. Far from that, he wins his freedom by persisting in it, only without the fevered thirst for immediate triumph. None the less Goethe does not conceive him to have purged himself. The Angels who rescue him toil up the sky dragging a burden of dross, to be cut from him only through the creative force of the Eternal Love that fills the unending circles of the Christian heaven. Thus did Goethe, in perhaps the last verses he ever wrote, unite once more Hellenism and Hebraism, Paganism and Christianity, the ideals of the past with the problems of the modern world. This breadth of view, itself the outcome of the mastery gained by a strong will and a steady intellect over sensibilities far acuter than outsiders guessed, helped him to the position that he claimed, modestly and proudly, at the close of his life, that of a Liberator, not of a Master, a title he put from him with distaste.

The Romantic Revival with its thirst for experiment in life had already begun in Germany when he was a lad, and he who was the friend in youth of Herder and Jacobi, in mature manhood of Schiller, in old age of Schopenhauer, was at once its most daring leader and its soberest critic. And this because he never lost his hold on a centre of calm in all his storms of emotion, as might be apparent from his religious development alone, the dogmas of Christianity dropping away from him early in life without disturbing his fundamental faith in the spiritual nature of the universe. Thus he could at once judge and forgive both himself and his contemporaries. And it was in part due to this central security that he watched with a patience almost amounting to indifference the huge convulsions shaking Europe for close on thirty years (1789–1815) through the French Revolution and the career of Napoleon.

CHAPTER XL

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION AND NAPOLEON

THE problems raised by both cataclysms, though Goethe himself scarcely recognized it, were problems of his own, but they were attacked from quite another angle. Goethe was always negligent about political questions proper, and so far as he gave them thought he preferred the old system of an active monarchy with an ordered hierarchy of classes. But the leaders of the French Revolution realized that the full development of men's faculties, their goal as much as his, was impossible without abolishing the old privileges and admitting the people at large to a decision on their own destinies. The spirit of civic freedom which Rousseau had invoked, the spirit which conceives Law as "the expression of the General Will," was supported by the spirit of rational criticism and scientific research so strongly stimulated by Descartes and Voltaire. And if Europe was appalled by Revolutionary excesses and mob fury, it was also inspired by the prodigious spectacle of a nation transforming its entire system under the impulse of a new ideal. The first flush of the movement, no doubt, bright with the watchwords of Freedom, Equality, Brotherhood, and Citizenship, was darkened within a year or two by the distrust and violence of the extremists on either side. The actual Terror, it is true, lasted little more than a year—(April, 1793–July, 1794)—but when it subsided, France was left in the trough of the wave, her fate apparently in the hands of a corrupt and inefficient Directory. Yet even then she had achieved marvels, and shown that it was possible not only to subsist without the

ancient fetters, but that her citizen army could repel the foreign aristocrats who, aided by her reactionary sons, had attempted to crush her. But the building up of the new and stable order of which she had dreamed seemed for the time beyond her strength.

At this moment appeared, for good and for evil, the superman Napoleon. His Italian birth was no accident. By endowment as by race he recalled those Roman Emperors of the past who together with an intellectual enthusiasm for order had scant sympathy for freedom except so far as it provided them with efficient workmen. Yet just because Napoleon desired efficient workmen he had some reason for claiming that he was the true son of the Revolution. The side of it that meant "la carrière ouverte aux talens," an essential side, appealed to him forcibly, and he knew that organization, security, and the chance of a special reward for special effort were necessary to ensure it. Absence of official privilege was not enough to make the average man exert his talents to the full.

Therefore with a statesman's instinct he set himself almost at once to organize the tenure of property, the system of law, the status of the Church, the methods of administration, and the structure of the army. Up to a certain point he had a marvellous instinct for what the average supporter of the Revolution most desired and needed, and what the wiser of the Revolutionary leaders had outlined. He confirmed once and for all the distribution already made of the large estates among the bourgeoisie and the peasants; he took up the constructive work of codifying the law, begun in earnest by the Revolutionary leaders and foreshadowed even earlier, and he carried it through to a conclusion that has made it the law of France to this day, adding a body of judges to administer it; he set up a system of "prefects," local heads of the civil administration appointed by the chief of the State, a system which, while it proved a good instrument for his own despotism, was also capable of becoming, as it has become since, the servant of a Chamber elected by the people. He saw that the Revolutionists in their hatred of religious fanaticism had

pushed their own fanaticism far beyond the sentiment of the nation at large. They had made it penal for the clergy to perform their own rites in the ancient churches, and the intolerance was bitterly resented by the masses. No single measure did more to re-establish unity of spirit in France than Napoleon's repeal of these ordinances. At the same time he was careful to guard against the chance of the Church regaining any real political influence. He insisted on the State having a decisive voice in the appointment of the clergy, and he supported an independent system of secular and State education. That he over-centralized the government of France is undeniable, and the evil results in this respect may have been the more lasting because of the tendency to over-centralization already strong in French tradition. But there is no denying his constructive power.

Since his consummate ability marked him out for the unquestioned head of the Executive and since no one was more dexterous than he in posing as the representative of the people's will, he was able to draw all the threads into his own hands without at first too openly or too constantly outraging the democratic faith. But he never had any scruple, after his first recourse to the "whiff of grape-shot," in drawing upon military force if persuasion failed. Only he was a master, as the greatest generals have always been, in the art of combining the two.

With the eye of genius he saw that he possessed in the ragged, undisciplined, fiery soldiers of the Revolution a most admirable military material. Under the stress of invasion the Republic had introduced conscription, and Napoleon was not the man to let the weapon rust. Added to this, the enthusiasm of Republican France for spreading her ideas over Europe gave him a unique opportunity for founding an impregnable Dictatorship and gratifying alike his genius for organizing on a grand scale and his master-passion for power.

Thus with the rebirth of Republicanism was also revived once again in Europe, and with results both astonishing and natural, the Imperial tradition of a dominant race imposing,

by force if necessary, a system of good government on subordinate and backward nationalities.

Nor was it entirely hypocrisy that made Napoleon give himself out as a Liberator. He did to some extent really share the new-born Republican belief in the value of distinct and coherent national units freed from stupid oppression. This was part of the general belief in the value of individuality and its natural development that underlay the Revolution, and Napoleon was too acute not to see its foundation in fact. Only his ambition insisted that in the last resort the nationalities must all be subject to himself. Napoleonic France followed him, and thus the two of them, like Faust in the close of Goethe's drama, were perpetually destroying with the one hand what they tried to build with the other.

Italy, Napoleon saw and said, was destined for all her dismemberment to become once again a united nation, and the Italian patriots of his day welcomed his first advance. And though he sold Venice to Austria and let his satellites fleece the country which he was by way of redeeming, yet he did introduce a type of unified government, the impressions of which were of immeasurable value in training those Italians who liberated their own land at last.

Again, in Germany he taught Germans to break through the petty restrictions that separated tiny State from tiny State, checked industry, hampered trade, and prevented the active devotion to a common cause. On the other hand, the force of his tyranny overreached itself, and nowhere more remarkably than in Prussia. He saw in that little State the possibilities of the strongest German power against him and he determined to crush her. She had fallen in his day, after the vigorous and unscrupulous achievements of Frederick the Great, into a half-paralysed condition, hide-bound by antiquated conventions, at least as feudal and as cramping, with the one exception of priestly dominance, as those of the *ancien régime* in France. Serfdom was still in existence, and no member even of the bourgeoisie could hold land or become an officer in the army. A Prussia of this type fell prostrate before Napoleon, but there was a new Prussia in her womb.

Stimulated by the force of Stein's leadership and by her own fury at the monstrous terms Napoleon exacted after Jena, the Prussian nation swept aside the old strangling restrictions, sweeping aside also the solemn engagements her king had made with the oppressor. Patriotism was held to justify unscrupulous measures, and while there is undeniable grandeur in a people awakening from lethargy under the very grip of a tyrant and becoming the heart and soul of a triumphant resistance, it is obvious that the war taught them evil lessons also and reinforced evil traditions left them by their own Frederick. Goethe saw this; his love of order and his admiration for Napoleon's genius prevented him from being blinded by the passions of patriotism. A ribald bit of telling doggerel (which he shrank from publishing in his life-time) has in it the cutting truth of satire:

"The angels fought for us and the right,
But the angels were beaten in every fight,
Devil above and angel under,
And the devil walked off with the whole of the plunder.
Then all our good folk fell to prayer,
And the Lord looked into the whole affair.
Said God the Son—(and we know that He
Saw the matter plain from eternity)—
'They'd better act as the devils act.
They must scruple no longer, that's the fact,
But use all means till the war is won,
And sing *Te Deum* when all is done.'
We didn't wait to be told it twice,
And lo! the devils were whacked in a trice.
So now we sing complacently,
'It pays to behave like a devil, you see.'"

("Zahme Xenien," Bk. IX.
Cotta, Jubilee Edition).

It was not only in Germany that aggression overreached itself. Napoleon's invasion of Russia had roused the country to a sense of unity and a power of self-sacrifice that astonished both itself and the rest of Europe. The modern novel of Tolstoy's "War and Peace," a novel almost epic in its scope, brings this home with amazing vividness, even allowing for

the caricature in his drawing of Napoleon. Nor was it only the national sense that was now awakened in Russia. The struggle with Napoleon brought her at last into enduring communion with the West. The ferment of Republican ideas about freedom, responsible government, and the rights of thought, began to vivify her dreaming. The great writers of the nineteenth century, Turgenev, Tolstoy, Dostoievsky, show this again and again. It was the spirit of freedom that released the genius of Russia.

At the other end of Europe, Spain, when actually overrun by French armies, seemed to be rising from the dead. The high spectacle of her defiance roused the enthusiasm of Shelley and prompted some of the finest prose that Wordsworth ever wrote. Unlike Russia, Spain's work throughout the nineteenth century has not borne out this promise, but at the time she produced a painter, Goya, whose mastery of his craft and power of characterization give us a lightning-like impression of latent forces kept somewhere in reserve. There is a ferocity of truth in his pictures of war and suffering unique in the records of painting.

In England there was no need to rouse the national sense. That had been strong for centuries, often over-strong. But the effects of Napoleon and the French Revolution together were quite as great as elsewhere and as many-sided. A by-product of the struggle, but one with far-reaching results, was the huge development of her power overseas. Napoleon had quickened the pace by his expedition into Egypt, and England emerged with the basis of a colossal empire, India completely in her hands, Gibraltar still hers, Malta and the Cape of Good Hope resting-places for her ships, and the latter the starting point for the control of untapped resources. Her commercial instinct discerned at once the value of the tropics for the Old World, highly populated as it is and needing countless materials, from rice to rubber, that can only be produced in the warm places of the earth. That need has grown with the growing complexity of civilization, and England's early triumph in securing a direct hold on such sources of production gave her a perceptible advantage in the economic race.

At home the immediate influence of the Continental turmoil told in the two opposite directions of Reform and Reaction, making a long and doubtful equilibrium in politics. But in 1832 the carrying of the Reform Bill showed a decisive victory for the popular cause. Meanwhile we have to note, first, a glorious outburst of poetry as the eighteenth century passed into the nineteenth, an outburst that has points of resemblance with the earlier movement in Germany of which Goethe became the leader and also with the bound forward in France a little later when the pressure of the Napoleonic tyranny was removed. And next, sometimes clearly reflected in the literature, the emergence of problems, more particularly industrial and social problems, in something like their present form. These topics will occupy our next two chapters.

CHAPTER XLI

THE ROMANTIC REVIVAL AND THE NEW REALISM

TWO fresh tendencies are to be emphasized in the startling change from the typical prose that marks the eighteenth century to the poetry and enthusiasm that meet us at the close of it and at the opening of the nineteenth. One we may call, for want of a better word, the Romantic, in the good sense of that term, with its renewed search for the mysterious, the remote, the marvellous, its ardour for the ideal, its delight in the picturesqueness of the past, its revival of the longing to sing from the heart, the lyric impulse proper. The other is the desire to make literature adequate to the whole of reality, to sweep aside any conventions that interfere with this, to accept any subject, however common or repellent to the ordinary mind, if the artist himself found it fit to his hand, a desire often accompanied by a revolt against accepted standards in religion and morals.

Both tendencies make for liberty, both were united with the spirit of liberty, and both have remained strong in Europe ever since, have indeed grown in strength, and perhaps that is one reason why the great writers of that time are among all classics the chosen of modern readers.

The lyric impulse, the zest for actuality, the love of romance, the passion for freedom and equality, all come surging up in Burns, first herald of the movement (1749–1796). But Burns, though a genuine poet, has deficiencies and crudities that keep him from the first rank. And he is nothing of a thinker. Wordsworth and Coleridge when working together show an ardour for liberty that is far more deeply reasoned,

and a union of the strange and the simple that is far more subtle. The mysterious magic of "Kubla Khan" is set side by side with the human mystery of "Margaret" and the "Idiot Boy." Indeed, this desire to keep in touch with ordinary human life led Wordsworth, unsaved by any sense of humour, into some of his baldest absurdities. But it also helped him to his highest achievements. The plain grotesque figure of the old leech-gatherer, weary and indomitable among the lonely mountains, grows superhuman before our eyes as a type of man's power to match himself with circumstance. This respect for common humanity, accompanying the poet's extraordinary responsiveness to the unfathomable appeal of lonely Nature, gives a massiveness to his most dream-like moods. There is nothing thin about his mysticism. It is not a man unable to face ordinary life who is haunted by those

> "huge and mighty forms, that do not live
> Like living men."

It is entirely in harmony with his character that, prophet of solitude though he was, nothing could have been warmer than his sympathy with the French Revolution in its youthful prime when it promised peace to men, or sterner than his condemnation of it when it passed into aggression and he could only see

> "Frenchmen losing sight
> Of all they struggled for."

The thirst both for the facts of life and the dreams of poetry confronts us again in the lesser and very different genius of Byron. "The Vision of Judgment" owes much of its force and splendour to the alliance of close humorous observation and flashing satire with the breadth of imagination that can behold the Prince of Darkness rising on wings like thunder-clouds through the vast fields of space. In this poem Byron is at his finest because a genuine interest in political freedom has set him free for the time from the obsession of his own craving. Elsewhere he is incessantly thwarted and perverted by it. His verse is fevered by a passion like Faust's for personal triumph, fretting savagely at any

restraint, repudiating as monkish any control over the flesh. But this mood is never steady: it is shaken perpetually by doubt of itself, by disgust, by ill-concealed remorse, by everything that would be repentance if the repentance in its turn could be sure. His power cannot give him peace, it only tears his own lies to tatters, and even in cynicism he can find no refuge. A similar turmoil of feeling has reappeared now, with no sign as yet of its ending. Byron is on the whole out of fashion in England for the very good reasons that his poetry is not of the first quality and that his posing annoys a generation quick to detect affectation anywhere except in itself. But we have not got rid of Byronism. The best of his work sprang always from his love of liberty. Long before Italy was free he gave her his genuine sympathy, as Mazzini was to recognize with burning gratitude, and he gave his life to help Greece in her revolt from the Turk. Goethe, we have admitted, had little liking for revolution, but it was Byron's gallantry that fired him to complete his conception of Euphorion, the spirit of restless action born of Desire and Beauty, feverish as his father Faust before him, but discovering, just not too late, the goal of a life prepared to die for liberty.

The liberty that Byron revered was, however, only political liberty. Shelley, on the other hand, was filled with longing first for an external liberty not only political but economic and social, with full opportunity of all good things for all men, and next for the inward liberty that should set free a man's own deepest nature. It is thus that he anticipates so many modern movements. He was the singer of a Socialist ideal as yet hardly born. He chanted the national independence of every nation that he knew, wondering wistfully none the less whether triumphant nationalism would only bring the world back to the conflicts in which men hate and die. He demanded the emancipation of women in the interest of men as much as in their own. He welcomed science with unfeigned rapture as flinging open the world to man, and while there is no sign that, like Goethe, he conceived the outlines of Evolution, yet his sense of a kinship in all life was every

whit as keen. His enthusiasm for nature and all natural impulses made him, in spite of occasional misgivings, a confident believer in progress, if only the shackles of tradition could be struck off. He challenged, as such, the dogmas and the mythology of Christianity, tossing the whole system aside and then returning in tenderness to discover, if he could, what was eternally precious in it.

His challenge to official morality was as daring. He was prepared to test, and, in theory, to throw over every one of its canons, except those of truth and brotherly love, which his sincere and compassionate temperament would not suffer him to question. The likeness and the contrast to bold questioners later, to Ibsen, for example, or to Nietzsche, are both noticeable. Among the men of his time and country William Blake, more visionary even than himself, is closest to him here. The fettering of natural impulse was odious to them both, and there was an anarchic element in their thought that responds to a factor far more prominent now than in the soberer Victorian age that intervened. Poets, no doubt, long before Shelley, had sung the joys of sense with an unrestraint shocking to the narrowly moral. What is remarkable in himself and in Blake is their assertion that this freedom of view is part of a finer morality. It is of importance to add at once that in neither poets is this the dominant trait. Natural mysticism is the first thought for the lover of Blake:

> "To see a World in a grain of sand,
> And a Heaven in a wild flower,
> Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand,
> Or Eternity in an hour."
> ("Auguries of Innocence.")

And Shelley possessed the rare power of criticizing his own criticism. His last, and in some respects strongest poem, "The Triumph of Life," shows how his thought, led by Dante, was beginning to brood over the meaning of discipline. It is only the self-controlled who can conquer Life. Anarchic to the full Shelley could never be, any more than Blake, because he could never conceive of liberty as divorced from a clear-sighted and all-embracing love. It is only the natural

climax of all his feeling that the liberated world of his "Prometheus Unbound" should culminate in the vision of Man as

> "one harmonious soul of many a soul,
> Whose nature is its own divine control
> Where all things flow to all, as rivers to the sea."

I have said nothing so far of Shelley's pure poetic gift, but the peculiar mark of his genius is exactly the union of this high-flown enthusiasm with the exquisite sense of beauty. And a union not dissimilar can be felt in the achievement of his fellow-poet Keats, less Utopian than Shelley, and without Shelley's bent for wild speculation, but not less distinguished by a steady pressing forward from the sheer delight in sensuous images and the golden coin of fancy to the deeper treasures of imagination. It is significant that in his earliest long poem he put the joy given by the loveliness of "daffodils and the green world they live in" side by side with

> "the grandeur of the dooms
> We have imagined for the mighty dead."

Both poets, in their meditations, can even grow impatient of their own art, crying out that the men of action or of science do greater works than they. But no two men have achieved more in the short compass of their brief lives for the sustainment of all who believe with them that a world without beauty would be a dead world, that the sense of it is a second life, and that they who follow its spirit faithfully can neither be divided from other men nor enslaved in their own souls.

The passion for Beauty, for Nature, and for that artist's dreaming that is other than Nature, reappears, though far less triumphantly, in the English painting of the time. It is often faulty and erratic, as could never be said of Gainsborough's work, but it is full of interest. Blake is our one painter with a power of imaginative design, creating visions that can make him at times a not unworthy companion for Dante; Turner, pouring forth rhapsodies, often too rhapsodical, can at his best give us something that is kindred to the radiance and the

dignity of Nature as the solemn music of Wordsworth is kindred and the ethereal lilt of Shelley; Constable, held by the quiet charm of English summer landscape, searches after a noble realism that explains his influence later in France. The vivifying impulse he gave to the painter's delight in things seen added a new and needed element to the classic tradition of form that the French had taken over years before from the art of Italy, and that was now threatening to become stereotyped and empty. The course of painting in France since the Englishman prompted the new departure has shown a vigorous interplay, and sometimes a vigorous strife, between these two elements in art, the element of realistic portraiture and the element of pure design.

Beside the florescence of poetry and the promise in painting, two great branches of literature begin to take on a fresh development, the art of the novel and the art of history. There were clear signs that the ferment of feeling would find its most popular expression in the novel, that loose form in which a writer can heap together, in a style closer to common life than is possible for poetry, both his own personal emotions and his impressions of the world as he sees it round him or dreams of it in the past or speculates on its destiny.

The fullest development of the form in England was to come later. England had produced, as we have seen, pioneers in novel-writing during the eighteenth century, but their range had been limited to personal themes of contemporary life, or rather of contemporary manners, in which the deepest feelings were usually left untouched. With Walter Scott a new vein of romance was now opened, the echoes of the chivalry and charm of the past blending with a robust modern humour; while in Jane Austen the absurdities of exaggerated romance, like many other absurdities, encountered the keenest, most delicately humorous of realist critics. But it was not till well on into the nineteenth century that the English novel widened out to include all emotional issues. In Germany it had already done this, once. Goethe's "Wilhelm Meister" had dealt deliberately with what he counted one of the greatest tasks set to a man, the finding of his true vocation,

and the treatment gains rather than loses in impressiveness because the problem is worked out among the commonplace complexities of Bohemian and conventional life. The novel in Germany, however, did not follow up this broad opening, while in France, and later in Russia, it gathered to itself the most potent forces.

Balzac and Victor Hugo at the opening of the century, giants for all their faults, were both marked in different degrees by the characteristic union of romanticism and realism. They are avid for facts, but especially for facts that illustrate the wild element in the characters and hopes of men. Balzac, little concerned with political theory, is absorbed in a fierce observation of men and women as they show themselves in the detail of their individual lives and passions, a detail meticulous often to the last degree, prosaic to the last degree one might even say, except that it is lit up incessantly with a kind of thunderous light showing in blinding clearness the force of man's desire. And this desire, though perpetually squandered on trivialities or perverted into monstrosity, has always something infinite in its character. Balzac, despite constant lapses into sentimentalities and extravagances, is one of the greatest among novelists just because of this fiery intensity united to an unsurpassed sense of actuality. He might have reached unimaginable heights if he had possessed the crowning gift of humour, that comforting and redeeming spirit in which English writers of lesser calibre surpass him. Almost all our novelists indeed are dowered with that delicious gift, each in a different and highly-individualized form. Fielding, Smollett, Sterne, Walter Scott, Jane Austen, Thackeray, Dickens, Charlotte Brontë, George Eliot, Meredith, Hardy, how varied they are in this and how alike!

Victor Hugo, out of date as some of his rhapsodies may seem, is more modern than Balzac in his preoccupation with the problem of the suffering and the poor. He had no remedy for it save the remedy of Republican liberty, but he felt something of its urgency. He and Balzac together head very fitly the long and magnificent series of French novelists in the nineteenth century, casting a wide net from elusive shades

of personal passion to the reasons for a nation's downfall. Only, as before in French literature, we miss the indescribable touch of poetry, and perhaps that is why their treatment of love, subtle as it is on the physical side, has in it always a sense of barrenness, a desolating gap. The great Russian writers, of whom Turgenev at least was in close touch with the French artists, contrast very markedly with them here.

The insatiable curiosity for facts and the impulse to ask questions and to speculate, fostered by and fostering the scientific spirit, manifested themselves again in the zeal for history, already, as we have seen, showing itself in the eighteenth century. England, France, Germany all continue the work. And, roughly, we can distinguish two schools, one less interested in conclusions and more concerned with data, the other studying history for the light it throws on life. In England Gibbon (1737–1794), who would have smiled at Romanticism, is the type of the first ; Carlyle, full of Romantic affinities, and born the year after Gibbon's death, is the type of the second.

Carlyle, profoundly influenced by Goethe, was penetrated with a religious belief in every man's duty to develop himself by single-minded work, and hence not only his deep sympathy for the patient drudge, but his exultation in the heroes who had carved their way to full expression, or opened the path for others, or swept away, even if by a destroying Revolution, corrupt systems which blocked the road. He is little read now, partly because his perpetual preaching exasperates, for all his humour, a generation in full re-action from Victorian earnestness and alert to see in life many values besides the strictly moral, partly because, with all his sturdy love of independence, he was critical of political liberty. The liberty he desired was the liberty to work. The short-cut of force, making men work at the point of the bayonet if they would not do so of themselves, had a fatal appeal for him. On the other hand he saw, what has been seen with increasing clearness since, that even political liberty without further organization of forces economic and social must end for millions in a grinding slavery, where any talk of free self-development was

a mockery. Hence his attack on the incomplete Political Economy of his day—" the dismal science," with its dominant gospel of *laissez faire,* hence his contempt for the current Utilitarianism—the " Pig-Philosophy " that seemed to offer men only a sordid happiness. The one, he thought, was working with inadequate means, the other had no conception of an adequate end. But without adequate means or end man's life was a chaos, and Carlyle detested chaos.

CHAPTER XLII

THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION AND THE EMERGENCE OF MODERN PROBLEMS

THE chaos has not ceased, but perhaps we realize that it is chaos more fully than we did. If we do, it is in large measure because of the impetus given both by Carlyle and the Economists and Utilitarians whom he criticized so severely.

The Industrial Revolution, made possible through the inventions of applied science, had, since the end of the eighteenth century, been shifting work on an increasing scale from the field, the home, and the small shop where it was performed under the individual eye of the master, to the impersonal system of huge factories and mines. The result brought colossal evil as well as good. Science and Tool-making, the powers that combine with Nature and manual toil to produce all our wealth, powers that exalt man above the beasts, give him also licence to sink below them. The Tree of Knowledge can become a Tree of Death. This paradox, which is also a truism, has been proved over and over again both in peace and in war, from the superb poetry of flight and the recondite researches of the laboratory to the humbler achievements of the spinning-jenny and the threshing-machine. A new invention always means dislocation for the superseded trades, and the best cure is, by suitable distribution, to make the products of the invention compensate for the undeserved distress. But no attempt at this, speaking broadly, was made at first by the men to whom the structure of society had left the main task of distribution. They did

not raise wages, they lowered them. Hence, in the first quarter of the nineteenth century the growth of wealth was startling, but so also to any who looked below the surface was the misery and poverty among the workmen and the chronic trouble of unemployment. Not only was the poverty greater than it had been just before, but the contrast with the wealth was greater also, and a generation that had heard the names of liberty and equality could not continue to pass it by entirely. The "Condition of England Question," Carlyle insisted fiercely, was the question of questions and an answer must be found. Something was wrong with a system under which men went ragged because, it was said, too many clothes were made, or wore themselves to death by toil while others starved for lack of work and others again lived in plenty and idleness. The French Revolution had been a Nemesis on injustice: was the warning to be in vain? Men besides Carlyle were looking for an answer. Robert Owen in England had been experimenting in Socialism, theorists in France were dreaming of communist Utopias. Sober thinkers like John Stuart Mill turned to reconsider the foundations already assumed for the young science of Political Economy.

Towards the end of the eighteenth century the problems of wealth and industry, production and distribution, had attracted critical and methodical thought. Adam Smith's "Wealth of Nations," published in 1776, two years before the death of Voltaire, marks an epoch, and his view may be taken as typical of the first stage. The work had its limitations, as will appear in a moment, but it laid down certain basic principles. It recognized truths now accepted as truisms but long unrecognized, for example, that money is only the symbol of wealth; that wealth strictly so-called, the total, namely of those goods and services which can be got and given in exchange, springs ultimately from two sources only, the bounty of nature and the labour, manual and intellectual, of men; that whatever checks or wastes such labour is, so far, destructive. Further, that to maintain this labour and make it effective a great reserve of capital is needed, in other words, a store of power and material for

future work, material without which production cannot proceed at any adequate pace.

The chief deductions from these now commonplace truths were drawn as clearly. Spending money on ephemeral trifles could not, Adam Smith saw, as Voltaire had failed to see, be ultimately "good for trade." So far from increasing the means of future production, it turned aside the labour necessary for them. His attack on wasteful usages of wealth, from luxurious private equipages to needless expenditure on war, was trenchant enough to kill for ever the fallacy that so long as wages are paid it does not matter much to future wealth what they are paid for. But the fallacy re-appears in many forms: in our own day, for example, from the side of those artisans who urge a reckless policy of "ca' canny" in order that there may be work enough for all, as though there were no danger lest the limitation of production should lessen the material essential for more.

Again, it was because he saw the waste in the dominant colonial system that Adam Smith attacked the policy of exclusive trade with the colonies. The colonies could not sell in the most advantageous market, and thus, receiving less wealth, they had less to support future labour and their production was the less. The system might make England richer than other countries, it could not make her richer than she would have been had they been free to develop their own energies to the full. For similar reasons he inveighed against the incredibly foolish restrictions that in his time prevented labourers from moving freely out of one parish into another. But his attention was concentrated rather on high production than on fair distribution. He urges, it is true, that employers should pay more liberal wages to their workmen, but his chief stress is on the point that to do so would be in the interest of higher production. "The wages of labour are the encouragement of industry which, like every other human quality, improves in proportion to the encouragement it receives." It is important not to confuse Adam Smith himself with followers who travestied his doctrine, protesting in the sacred name of economic law, against any serious effort to increase the resources of the

poor. Still, he certainly seems to have felt that any attempt to fix by law a minimum wage would be futile, and this largely because of his conviction, shared by most thinkers then and for some time later, that with higher wages the labourers would at once beget larger families, and thus, with a greater number of claimants for work, wages would fall again. The stress laid by Malthus on the need of prudence in the begetting of children was inspired by the same fear.

Since the days of Adam Smith and of Malthus three considerations have modified this belief in "the iron law" of wages. First, it has become evident that with a higher standard of comfort the inconsiderate begetting of children does not increase, but lessens: next the power of workmen to combine prevents the greed of the masters from pressing to the full their advantage in a supply of labour that has no great capital of its own to sustain it. This power of combined resistance was withheld from labour in Smith's day by the Combination Laws, and their gradual repeal has made it possible for the Trade Union movement to limit the desperate competition for paid work that made a penniless man accept wages barely sufficient to support life. No one doubts to-day that the limitation has on the whole been good. Thirdly, the sense of justice in the community supported, step by step, the definite restriction by law of child labour in its worst forms. The success of these measures, hotly opposed as they were for a long time in the supposed interest of freedom by men otherwise enlightened, has had its share in making it possible now to fix by law a minimum wage in certain staple trades.

At the other end of the scale the public conscience all over the world has been concerned, intermittently but unceasingly, with the question of over-payment for slight services, or with the actual receipt by men and women of "a revenue" that, in Adam Smith's own words, "costs them neither labour nor care." Property, especially property that, like land, has a monopoly value over and above what is due to the exertions and abilities of the owner, can, it is clear, give its fortunate possessor an unearned advantage in the economic struggle, an advantage often measured by money rent, an advantage

that he may use in ways disastrous to other men. Should not this power, it is asked now, like enormous political power in the past, cease to be left entirely to individuals, and be limited by the opinion and advice of the community? Certain regulations we have all accepted, but are not still more needed? Yet a sound instinct shrinks from over-regulating. Not selfishness merely, but foresight distrusts the out-and-out demand of the doctrinaire Communist or Socialist that all the means of production should be in the hands of the community. In short, the pressing problem of the time, as Mill foresaw, is how to ensure a fairer distribution without lessening output. Increase in output is imperatively demanded, seeing that a rigorously equal distribution of the national dividend in England, the wealthiest of European countries, would only work out for each individual at something under £40 a year, an amount clearly not enough for the full life that the modern spirit demands. And up to a certain point competition without a doubt stimulates production. Socialism in whatever form, Guild Socialism or State, while it might ensure better distribution, is likely to blunt the spur of need and the incentive of private ambition. Can it put adequate motives in their place?

And here two things should be distinguished. The one, that in our present society, on the whole individualist, there is the chance, at any rate for the luckier individuals, of unfettered personal enterprise, and it is hard to see how this invaluable liberty can be retained under any uncompromising scheme of Communism. If the community owns all the capital it will dictate its terms to all the labour. The other is, that while men are no better than they are now, the bribe of high profits and the dread of personal poverty appear for the majority necessary incentives to the needed production. Are we to supplant these indirect incentives by direct dragooning? There have been thinkers and men of action to urge it, from Plato to Trotsky. But the prospect is scarcely inviting to the lover of liberty. The hope remains that it may become possible in the development of man to supplant the mercenary instincts, at least in great measure, by

something better. Whether indeed this shall come to pass or no is a question that, after all, " not argument, but effort shall decide." In so far, however, as their place is not so supplied, it is of the utmost importance to recognize them : the art of government lies largely in making terms with lower motives while fostering the higher. " God must still obey the Devil," in Wycliffian phrase. To shut one's eyes to the lower is simply to court catastrophe of the type that has befallen the doctrinaires of Russian Communism, untrained in corporate life, and with no tradition behind them of sane and sensible compromise, the give-and-take essential to co-operation, " the yieldingness of a strong will."

The problems of price alone are enough to illustrate the intricacy of our dangers. In an ordinary capitalist society price is fixed by two main factors : first, the cost of sustaining the labour needed to produce the article, and next, the amount that the consumer is willing to give for it, and this latter may, and often does, depend directly on the " scarcity value " of the goods in question. During a famine the price of all bread goes up, though conceivably for any one particular loaf no more labour may be needed in its production. The producer wants, and takes, as high a price as he can get, and the consumer, famine-stricken, will pay almost any price. Now the older school of political economists—(their followers, at least, if not their leaders)—were, on the whole, content with the operation of these two forces. They saw in them an automatic adjustment of supply to demand, for if the price went up it would attract producers to increase the output until the demand was met. Nor in the long-run, so they urged, would the consumers suffer, because, as soon as the supply was sufficiently increased, the scarcity value would disappear and prices fall.

In all this there is much, as we have fully admitted, that is perfectly sound. But other questions press for an answer. What about the short-run ? And the excessive profits made in that short-run ? Do they not often go to men who slip away from the dangers of the " slump," and never disgorge their inordinate gains ? The coining of the word " profiteer "

is significant of the shrewd popular apprehension on this point, and indicates, by the way, in its distinction from "fair profit," the important truth that economic questions are often questions of degree. Moreover, there are cases, those, namely, of monopolies and quasi-monopolies, such as the control over land or over a limited stock of minerals, where the supply cannot be increased indefinitely and where, owing to this, it is easy for the fortunate possessor to hold the community indefinitely to ransom. This is the case, for example, with building-land where the population is growing. There the value may go up and up, and yet the owners have done no work whatever to deserve their "unearned increment." Yet to tax the whole of such "surplus value" out of hand in every case is not the simple thing it may appear to the superficial enthusiast. The boundary between fair profit, i.e. payment for work done *plus* a due allowance for risk and for waiting, excess profit ("profiteering"), and sheer economic "rent" where no labour whatever is performed and no risk taken, is uncommonly difficult to draw. If it is drawn too much against the capitalist (large or small), industry will inevitably dwindle, may dwindle even to starvation-point, as appears to have happened in Russia: if it is drawn too much in his favour, as undoubtedly is the case in most modern societies, then those dependent on him, whether consumers or workmen, are pretty sure to be fleeced. And even supposing that it is fairly drawn, what is to be done with the proceeds? Is the sum that represents the surplus value simply to be handed over to the State? That assumes that the State will spend it more wisely than the profiteer. And very likely it will (though this conclusion, be it noted, is by no means certain). That the community, through its voting-power, has some power of controlling the spending, and that the Government of the State at least professes to aim at the good of all, furnish perhaps the most cogent arguments for this course. There are, however, obvious dangers, and there are other ways proposed of distributing the surplus. Even this cursory survey should not omit to note the expansion of those group organizations within the State that play so

large, and on the whole so promising, a part in modern industry. The principle that non-capitalists and workers should and must organize appeared first in the Trade Union movement, but it shows itself now in other forms. The consumers' Co-operative Societies, for example, have made a substantial contribution towards solving the problem of price. All members buying regularly at the Company's shops receive a dividend from the profits at the end of the year in direct proportion to the purchases each has made. Thus if an article happens to be in high demand it is not the producer only who benefits by the good price : the benefit is shared by all who buy it.

Another, and a most important aspect of the industrial problem, is the especial concern of those who advocate Guild Socialism or Syndicalism. They argue that intelligent human beings cannot be satisfied with wages, even good wages, fixed merely from above ; they desire a voice in the conditions of the industry by which they live, something to make them more than mere "hands," mere "living tools," as Aristotle (who accepted slavery) would have called them. And they urge that cut-throat competition between branches of the same regular trade has been proved to be wasteful, silly, and nearly always fatal to reasonable co-operation between employers and employed. In a slack time the unscrupulous employer, skilful at grinding the faces of his men, has too great an advantage over his humaner competitors. Let all the resources of such a trade, they suggest, be pooled, and let all masters and workmen join as equals in the general management of the whole. It is the principle of the Trust or the "Merger," applied in the interests of all who toil in the trade, not of the capitalist merely. Of course there are grave objections, chiefly the time-honoured and not ill-grounded fear lest the security gained might lead to a slackening of effort and the stress on team-work prevent personal initiative. But the scheme has the huge advantage that it opens to the workman the prospect of an intelligent share in great enterprises and a direct veto on degrading conditions. That both are imperative needs, if our civilization is to become truly civilized and our culture

more than the precarious inheritance of a few, no impartial student is likely to deny.

Meanwhile modern thought, struggling with the complexities of the problem, cannot be too grateful to the earlier economists who paved the way by first analysing the wealth-making motives which do actuate the average man and tracking out their interplay, even if it holds that they ignored too often the connexion of wealth with welfare. It is the outstanding merit of later pioneers such as the German Karl Marx that, like Owen before them, they do, with whatever crudities and fallacies, draw attention to the glaring inequalities in our present system of distribution and point out the conceivability of an arrangement at once more economical and more equitable. It is not probable that their services will be forgotten. If the well-to-do are tempted to forget, the chronic "labour unrest" is not likely to allow it. The workers, often selfishly, continue clamorous for a solution. The considerations we have touched upon indicate that the solution will be found in a composite system, combining both Individualism and Socialism: organizing, for example, on the lines of national services those trades where the demand is stable or the supply essentially limited, while leaving free play to competition in more adventurous paths: fixing minimum wages and maximum incomes, but not so narrowly as to leave scant scope for personal ambition.

The problem is felt to be the more insistent because the modern world cannot go back to any mediæval worship of asceticism, nor yet can it accept with a conscience undisturbed, as the ancients could, a basis of practical slavery on which a chosen few could live the life of leisure and culture. Its goal, whether it believes it can reach it or not, is that of happiness for all.

It was the merit of the English Utilitarians to make this clear; to judge everything according as it served this end: —creeds, prejudices, institutions. It was their defect that they did not see clearly that what would satisfy men was not merely a happiness desired, but one *approved*, and indeed they themselves, by choosing for their aim the happiness of

all, had admitted, without realizing the admission, that it was not *any* kind of happiness, high or low, that would content them, but happiness of a definite quality, for it was to be based on the justice that counted each man as an end in himself, and no one as "more than one." And as we look back on the vista of history we see that the modern mind, inheritor of the past, recognizes not justice and kindness only but other definite qualities in the happiness it pursues. It wants the happiness found in health, splendid physique, congenial work, laughter, self-determination, the discovery of truth, the delight in beauty. But almost all these things require wealth. The preoccupation with economic questions that marks this age is not merely a sign of materialism. It is at least also a sign of the rich ideal for human life gathered from the experience of centuries, illumined by a slowly awakening sense of justice and a growing realization both of the difficulty in combining justice with freedom and the paramount necessity of attempting it for all. This is the aim of the modern conscience. It desires a unity that would include the freedom of every man, just as it desires in its thought and its art to take stock of every fact. But it has not yet found a solution, any more than it has yet found a philosophy or a religion to unify its speculations. And it would be pharisaical to hide from ourselves the unpleasant truth that with the bulk of us it is little but lip-service that we pay to our conscience. Hence in part the influence of those headstrong reformers who, in despair at the callousness and wilful blindness of the propertied classes, look to armed rising of the masses as the only means to the end we most of us profess to desire.

There is no short and easy way out from the toils of a problem complicated by the very forces that may in the end find a solution. It is obvious, for example, that the problems of labour and capital cannot be solved by any one nation alone. Only joint international effort can succeed. And a sane internationalism can only be built up by those forces of sympathy and unity that, acting in smaller spheres, have made nations themselves possible. Yet nationalism has

proved over and over again a foe to that wider development which would complete its service to the world. So true is it that

> "the God of old time will act Satan of new
> If we keep him not straight at the higher God aimed."

The fervent expectation of Mazzini that, nationalism once satisfied, nations would see that their interest lay in helping each other, has not, alas! been fulfilled. Mazzini's was a true gospel, but the Day of its Coming is not as he thought. Co-operation, "association," should doubtless be, as he announced, the watchwords of the coming age, but their problems are thornier than he guessed, martyr-spirit though he was. Even where nationalism is not aggressive, it often complicates the task. Free-trade, for example, would probably be adopted universally and increase the wealth of the world at a rapid rate, if it were not that men desire, not merely to make money, but to make it in their own country and under their own flag.

And still the fact remains that the mind of Europe, after its long journey, so full of tragedies and glories, does find its richest memories in the varied work of varied nations, and does conceive a condition for all its children immeasurably nearer to the ideal union of justice and freedom. This of itself may give us hope that the world of the West is, after all, approaching nearer to the undiscovered law of its own liberty.

How far has that hope been fortified by the years since 1832? It has been a time crowded alike with great successes, great expectations, and great disasters. It culminated, characteristically enough, both in the Great War and the founding of a League of Nations intended to be universal. Its distinctive achievement in thought, the establishment of the theory of Evolution, gave rise, and still gives rise, alike to the most hopeful and the most despairing views of existence. Already before the nineteenth century, individual thinkers, as for example Goethe (mentioned before in this connexion), inspired largely by the study of comparative anatomy and comparative botany, reached the view that all life was akin.

The Frenchman Lamarck, at the very opening of the nineteenth century, definitely advanced to the position that all life was linked together by chains of heredity, that species were not fixed from all time and for all time, but came into existence through growth from a primitive common stock. The nascent science of geology, deciphering the fossil "record of the rocks," indicated that the advance was, on the whole, towards higher and higher forms, forms more rich and complex and better suited to their surroundings.

But what was the inner meaning of this advance? And how did it come about? Lamarck took the bold and hopeful view that there was an inherent tendency in living organisms themselves to expand their life and adapt it to its environment. The upward movement in complexity would be continuous except that changing conditions in the environment could produce different habits in the animal, and these, when confirmed, could affect their structure. "Progress in complexity of organization exhibits anomalies here and there in the general series of animals, due to the influence of environment and of acquired habits." ("Philosophie Zoologique," Part I, c. vi., tr. by Hugh Elliot.) The drawbacks to Lamarck's way of putting it were, first, that the mere assertion of an upward tendency in Nature did not at all explain *how* exactly she brought her works into being, and, next, that it was hard to see how his subordinate factor of acquired habit could produce anything like the effects he assumed. These difficulties, among others, prevented any general acceptance of the theory. And, indeed, controversy is still raging over them to-day, although in subtler and more complicated forms. But by the middle of the century a huge advance was made through Darwin's patient analysis of the factor he called "Natural Selection." The organisms showing variations which, however caused, were calculated to secure the survival of their possessors in the struggle for scanty sustenance amid a host of enemies would, he argued, naturally tend to survive; while those not so well furnished would die out.

Now this view, so stated, does not directly conflict with a refined form of Lamarckianism; does not, in truth, touch the

ultimate cause of variations at all. But as a matter of fact Darwin was very anxious not to assume any definite tendency to vary along any particular lines. This seemed to him a plunging back into fanciful and also unfruitful hypotheses, like a recurrence to doctrines of special creation or of God's will in lieu of a search into actual processes. He thought it enough to admit a tendency to small variations in any and every direction compatible with life, an admission that he considered to be amply confirmed by observation. Working on this tendency, a tendency in itself indifferent, the forces of natural selection, sexual selection, and also in a minor degree the forces of use and disuse so greatly over-emphasized by Lamarck, would, he held, be enough to develop the complex and widely-divergent forms of life which we behold.

No one can be surprised that the Darwinian theory roused a whirlwind of controversy and emotion among thinkers, religious, philosophic, and scientific. It was not merely that it made the literal interpretation of the Old Testament incredible. That had been already undermined, first, by the study of geology, and then by historical criticism and the comparison with other religions. Nor was it even that it allied man by direct descent to the beasts who are believed to perish. The trouble at bottom lay in the nature of the prominence given to Natural Selection. The exhibition of this factor undoubtedly established the theory, and even to-day modern thought, recasting the whole system, full of new lights on the inner processes of heredity, and prepared to recognize, as Darwin was not, the possibility of sudden large mutations, cannot deny that Natural Selection has been an instrument indispensable in the history of development. But if it is taken as practically the sole factor and if the basis assumed for it is that of sheer indiscriminate variation, then the hope that the essential characteristic of life on earth is Progress, the hope that burst into flower about the time of the French Revolution, would appear to be stricken at its root. What real ground is there for hope if there is nothing to indicate an immanent purpose in the universe? Blind accident and the sheer struggle for life among creatures competing for the chance of a precarious

existence are, at bottom, the forces that have made the world. That, at least, is the natural inference, and it was drawn by many. Further, an uncritical application of the principle to the peculiar problems of man in a self-conscious society, led to fresh arguments for race and class domination, for ruthless competition, and for incessant war. But a wholly different turn could be given to the evolutionary hypothesis if it was held that Lamarck, after all, was on the right track, and that, underlying natural selection and the struggle for life, there was a real tendency in organisms themselves to produce higher forms, meaning by higher those that gave more scope for intelligence, beauty, and love. The moral effort of man and the gradual flowering of culture out of savagery would then take their places as processes in harmony with the fundamental trend of things towards the better.

This, the view of hope, is the one that has tended to prevail in our modern world. As such, it might almost be called the distinctive religion of our time, all the more significant because it revives, possibly with the added weight given by modern science, that old belief in formative impulses struggling up through chaos into ordered freedom, the belief that we saw dominated so much of Greek thought and influenced so profoundly the mediæval mind. But if it is a religion, it is one crossed by doubt. Is the process, even if upward, really towards perfection and permanence? Or, as the Greeks themselves dreaded, is it destined in time to reverse itself and recur to the original formlessness? There are speculations of cosmic physics that reinforce the prospect of such a desolating end; suns grow cold, and physical energy tends to be dissipated into positions where no activity is possible unless an impact from without disturbs the quiescent frame. This double outlook towards growth and final decay was actually accepted in the views of Herbert Spencer, who outlined a conception of the whole cosmos developing from a primitive nebulous "homogeneity" into a fully-articulated and harmonious system, but a system doomed to sink back again into the undifferentiated sameness from which it sprang. The ultimate conclusion here is gloomy enough, but it did

not bite on the age. It was an age after all of general buoyancy, it was preoccupied with questions of immediate practice and discovery, distrusting all speculation concerning ultimate issues. Without asking whither a real faith in continuous development led the mind, or whether it could be reasonably accepted without a further faith in the spiritual as completing and transcending the physical, the nineteenth century took the belief in Progress through Evolution for the cardinal article of its creed. That belief was the mainspring of numberless movements for reform, political, economic, educational, throughout England, France, Germany, Italy, Russia. How far, we may ask once more, did the results of the nineteenth century and the years that followed it justify such hope and faith?

CHAPTER XLIII

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY AND RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

(F. S. Marvin)

THE period from 1832 to the present time, though crowded with world-events and developments of thought of the most far-reaching kind, has yet certain persistent features which enable us to treat it summarily in one survey and give us some indication of a common direction. We take 1832, the date of our own first Reform Act. But it will be noticed at once that 1830, which is the corresponding date in France, has much the same significance. In each case an end was reached of the reaction which followed the French Revolution and the Napoleonic wars. The forces of reform which had been penned up for thirty years from fear of revolution, began to play again. In both countries democracy began to take on a definite shape and an authority which have never been seriously threatened since. In each case the elevation of the middle-class was the first step. In England the stages are clear and unbroken. In 1867 the franchise was extended to the working classes in the towns, in 1884 to the agricultural labourers, in 1918 to women and to a large number—practically the whole—of the remaining adult men. In France, after the middle-class monarchy of Louis Philippe and the short second Republic, the second Empire makes a temporary break. But this interval in democratic power was more apparent than real. Napoleon III came in as the result of a plebiscite ; his tenure was short and always precarious and he disappeared, unregretted, at the first serious external check.

The democratic lead of the two Western European powers gives in politics, as in so much else, the keynote of the tendency in other civilized states. All have now become, nominally at least, democratic. It might be maintained, perhaps, that the example of the greatest Republic, farther West, counted for most in this development. But the United States, in their comparative isolation and with their freedom from restrictive traditions, though powerful by example, had less influence in practice. In Europe more difficult problems had to be faced, and France and England, since their final and reconciling struggle over Napoleon, have faced them in common. This was the case in the first Entente under Louis Philippe, it was again the case at the Crimean War when the affairs of the Near East first came under united European cognizance, it has come to a decisive issue in the Great War and the League of Nations which follows.

It is impossible in this short chapter to trace the growth of the other democracies which now practically occupy the whole surface of the globe. But one or two cases are typical of others and illustrate some especial point. In Italy we see the intimate connexion between the democratic spirit and the sense of nationality. Italy made herself, as the liberators predicted. The national consciousness, finding appropriate instruments in Mazzini, Garibaldi, and Cavour, ensured her at the same time freedom from external rule and democratic government within. The House of Piedmont was accepted as the Royal House, partly in gratitude for its services, partly as the safest form of a hereditary Presidency. In Germany the want of previous political experience led to the postponement of a popular constitution which seemed possible at Frankfort in 1848. The training in combination and self-government which the people needed was furnished under the Empire by the growth of Socialism. It was Socialism of a moderate type which disciplined the working classes in the last three decades, and when the crash came in 1918 which removed the imperialistic government, it was the socialists who succeeded to power and who are now preserving the unity of the State in face of grave difficulties on both extremes.

There is in fact no doubt of the triumph of democracy in Western and Central Europe. The Great War removed all the autocratic rulers, and has set up in the new States created by the Peace Treaty democracies of a more complete and socialistic character than any which preceded it.

The other type of democracy about which it is more difficult to generalize or predict is that which has arisen, increasingly in recent years, through imitation of the West. Japan, the first example, we know and respect for her activity and stable power. One awaits with hope, but less certainty, the democratic evolution of China, as a great united State. In India we have ourselves to supervise the experiment. Persia, Arabia, Syria, Egypt, all are inspired by the same ambition. In each case there is the double problem, the want of self-governing institutions of long standing within the State, and the relation—tutelary, mandatory or protective—in which each stands to some European power established within its borders.

It is this relation which brings us to the second great political and social fact of recent years.

Side by side with the spread of democracy in Europe has gone the spread of European power and culture throughout the world. It is true that the earliest pioneers of Europe in other lands went under feudal or monarchical patronage. The Crusades were thus organized. Columbus sailed under the flag of Ferdinand and Isabella. Jacques Cartier reported to Francis I, as Drake to Elizabeth. But the expansion, from the Crusades onwards, was in fact a popular one. Europe began to overflow physically just as its mind began to find fresh fields for conquest. Thus the nineteenth century, and especially the latter part of it, is the period of the greatest geographical and colonial expansion, just as it is of scientific and political activity.

Two painful and detrimental results followed from this otherwise admirable exhibition of human enterprise and endurance. One was the competition, at first open, and keenly enjoyed, between the rival explorers and settlers of different nations. The other was the effect, often completely

disastrous, always dangerous, of the Western settler on the more primitive peoples whom he disturbed. Both of these effects have a long story; each is a strong factor in the international settlement which the world has just been compelled to make in the League of Nations. Rivalry in colonies and trade divided Holland and England in the seventeenth century, France and England in the eighteenth, Germany and England in the nineteenth. In the eighteenth it was so potent a cause of strife that some historians—though no doubt wrongly—have treated it as the leading motive in the period. In the nineteenth and twentieth it contributed largely to the outbreak of the Great War. The effects, harmful and otherwise, of European expansion on less progressive people, are a subject still requiring deep and extensive study: it is one of the greatest topics in history.

One result, however, of these two dangers—the competition among the European nations themselves and the treatment of weaker people—became more and more apparent towards the end of the nineteenth century. Men awoke to the need of much more careful dealings and agreement between nations, and, above all, to the duty of recognizing a higher law than their own selfish interests in exploiting the earth.

It may seem strange to make this claim for an age which ended in the greatest of all wars, and in any case it must not be supposed that the principles involved were quite new ideas; both can, no doubt, be traced back for ages. But it is undoubtedly true that more frequent intercourse, the needs of commerce, and the dangers of war led steadily throughout the nineteenth century to a network of international relations being formed, dealing with all manner of subjects—posts, sanitation, commerce, treatment of native races, etc.—and forming a basis for the Hague Conference in 1899 and the League of Nations in 1919. A great deal of this arose from simple necessity; a great deal—including all the arbitration treaties—was inspired by the desire to avoid wars. For arbitration between nations, as well as the making of permanent agreements, increased greatly during this period. The expansion of the West, however, involved the interests of the

whole world as well as of the European nations themselves. This was recognized more and more clearly and generally as the century wore on. Isolated thinkers, especially religious men like Las Casas at the time of the Conquistadores or the Quakers in North America, had long striven for the more humane ideal. But from the end of the eighteenth century onwards the ideal of humanity and of trusteeship was inscribed on the banners of all progressive nations. If they fell away from it—and they often did—it was not from general ignorance but from passion. The wrong was recognized and sometimes punished.

The best landmark for the growth of humanity in expansion, before the inauguration of the League of Nations, is the Brussels Conference of 1890. A previous conference at Berlin in 1884 had secured freedom of trade for the competing nations in the basins of the Congo and the Niger. This was the obvious interest of business. But in 1889 Lord Salisbury, through the Belgian Government, again called the Powers together to consider questions relating to the slave trade in Africa. Now the motive was humanitarian. The general Act of the Conference, agreed to by all and issued in 1890, declared that the purpose of the Powers was to "put an end to the crimes and devastations engendered by the traffic in African slaves, to protect effectively the aboriginal populations of Africa, to ensure for that vast continent the benefits of peace and civilization."

A worthy aim, but not beyond what the dictates of humanity would impose upon a united Western Civilization dealing with the weaker and less civilized.

The League of Nations, with its mandates, is the next great step after this. It aims at developing and providing a permanent machinery for the purposes of the Brussels Conference, just as on the international side it develops and makes permanent the work of the Hague Conferences and the Hague Tribunal. Europe, as a political, social, and intellectual unity, had since the Reformation lost sight of the common forces which gave it birth. But these were growing all the time under other forms. International Law, recognized as such

since the seventeenth century, has its roots in Rome, but spreads its branches over all the world. Science, and its applications to industry and transport, have co-operated in the same three centuries to bring mankind more closely together. A deeper and more widely diffused sense of a common humanity and a common duty is pervading the Churches and bringing them also into a possible concord. All these, more purely spiritual motives, have concurred with the sheer necessities of trade and self-preservation to make a world-organization the natural issue, not only or even primarily of the war but of the whole historical evolution which preceded it. The war shook from the tree the fruit which had long been ripening.

There are many other aspects of world co-operation which claim attention in this last period of European history, beside the two which took the leading place in the organization of the League. Another, the industrial, has made for itself a special and a very active branch. It has been clear for over a hundred years that a political democracy must carry with it such regulations of industry as will enable every citizen to act as a free man and enjoy the happiness and opportunities of life. This industrial organization of the State has proceeded rapidly in recent years, through trade unions, combinations of employers, trade boards and councils promoted by the State, as well as by a mass of factory legislation. Some thinkers even look forward to national Councils representing all the citizens by their professions, as parliaments, assemblies, etc., represent them territorially. No doubt experiments of that kind will be tried. But this side of national life has also its international bearing. From the sixties onwards men like Marx have striven to organize the working classes of all nations in one body, and, though his, the earliest International, failed, we see at the present moment three rival "Internationals" competing for the allegiance of the workers. The "International Labour Bureau of the League of Nations," perhaps its most flourishing department, aims at levelling up the conditions of labour all over the world. It proposes to bring the pressure of a united world to bear on the backward and

recalcitrant nation which tolerates a standard below that generally agreed on. Only thus can the risk of levelling down be surely avoided; only by a united and world-conscious working class can world-peace be secured.

Science, even more than labour, is an international activity, and its products in industry as well as in healing, hygiene, and education, are, or should be, of international application. The war, with its stimulus to scientific invention of a special kind, has created a wholesome alarm that, unless we take counsel together, men may soon find themselves possessed of forces so deadly that civilization might easily be wrecked and mankind destroyed wholesale in a fit of madness. It is a real danger, but not a new one. From the eighteenth century onward man's mechanical genius has outstripped his moral powers. He made money by the steam-engine almost as quickly as he wished, and before he knew how to use it for the good of the workers. Hence the slums of our cities and the unthinkable horrors of child-labour. Our present command over unlimited powers of destruction, by poison gases, by aeronautics, and by explosives, creates an even worse outlook, if the power and the will to combine for other purposes lags behind. For nature as revealed by human skill presents problems which will task to the utmost the resources of our wisdom and our goodwill. To hasten the development of the latter must appear, to every thoughtful mind aware of the facts, as the most urgent task imposed on the race in the interests of its own preservation and prosperity.

The story of science is not, however, a tragic episode in the human comedy, but the most encouraging, if looked at broadly and continuously, and without a pessimistic twist. With deadly potentialities, it offers immense realized good and possibilities for the future beyond the dreams of the past. We can only here notice one or two of these broader aspects which have become prominent in recent years. The first and the most congenial to our general subject is the essentially social and international character of all scientific work. There has never been a time when scientific discovery has not depended on the intercourse, not only of individual minds,

but of different races, Greeks with Egyptians and Babylonians, Arabs with Europeans, Italians with ancient Greeks. The last hundred years have accentuated this and made science and learning appear conspicuously as the most substantial basis of international unity. It is one of the striking contradictions of which our nature is full, and which it is our task to reconcile, that science, containing the possibilities sometimes realized, of wholesale international destruction, is also that department of our activity in which national and other distinctions are least felt. Every great step in its recent development has been shared, by two or three of the leading nations in the world. Carnot, Joule, Mayer, and Helmholtz all contributed essential elements to the doctrine of the Conservation of Energy which was the chief physical law reached in the middle of the nineteenth century (1848). Lamarck, Treviranus, Darwin, are three names from a host, especially of French, German, and English thinkers, which built up the greatest of all biological conceptions in the latter part of the century. Einstein now takes his place among the giants of mathematical physics whose birth in Italy, France, Germany, England or any other land, has been quite irrelevant to their fame or work. The fact is of course obvious and well recognized, and every one knows too that, though men of science and professors may occasionally lapse, yet normally they are much more united in mutual respect and mutual help than any other class.

The latter part of our period is distinguished by the number of international associations which grew up naturally to promote some common scientific aim and strengthen this feeling of comradeship in a great human effort. Such conferences are the counterpart in modern times of the œcumenical councils in the Catholic world. It will be noted that conference for political purposes and other practical matters has also in quite recent days become increasingly common and useful,[1] side by side with the League of Nations. Conference is the order of the day, and science set the example.

[1] Sir Maurice Hankey, "Diplomacy by Conference," "Round Table," April, 1921.

But we have to look at the matter of scientific work even more than at its place of origin to estimate its social nature and its bearing on the unity of mankind. Four groups of discoveries, special lines of work, are pre-eminent in the last seventy or eighty years. The first is of those connected with the doctrine of evolution. Biology became in this period the predominant branch of science. The second is of those connected with the conservation of energy. The third arises from spectral analysis. The fourth, which quite recently has enjoyed special prominence, concerns the nature of matter and its connexion with light, electricity, and other forms of wave-energy. The second, third, and fourth groups come constantly more closely together and form the physical sciences as distinguished from the first, the biological or animate.

Now it is no idle fancy, but the deepest conclusion approached by the workers in both the main departments of science, that in spite of the enormously increased number and complexity of the observed facts, the tendency is always towards discovering links and identities between phenomena previously regarded as distinct. The spectroscope, greatest revealer of wonders to the age, brought sun, stars, and planets into one chemical system and taught us the similarity in the structure of all the known material universe. It was thus the completion of the work done by the telescope in the seventeenth century. As Galileo and Newton had identified the mechanics of the heavenly bodies with that of mass and motion on the earth, so the dark lines of Kirchhoff and Fraunhofer, when fully interpreted, showed matter of like molecular nature, evolving at different stages throughout the depths of space.

This was the most imposing feat of human insight and ingenuity. But parallel with it on the mathematical side went the gradual extension of one scheme of thought, expressed in differential equations, to all the types of wave-motion into which the phenomena of light, heat, magnetism, and electricity had been reduced. Here Clerk-Maxwell took up the work of Lagrange and by interpreting mathematically

the electrical discoveries of Faraday, gave mankind the highest exact generalizations yet reached of physical phenomena. It was another and still more profound act of unification, educed by the power of abstract thought.

On the side of the sciences of life the progress was not widely different, though the gulf between animate and inanimate remains unpassed. Research has constantly traced further into the realm of the living the laws of physics and chemistry; it has not yet eliminated the distinctive quality of the living thing; it has rather emphasized it. And this quality of life consists itself largely in a certain unity of action. One of the greatest of our living biologists has summed up his conclusions on the whole subject in a recent book: [1] "(1) Living creatures are individualities standing apart from things in general, and not exhaustively described in mechanistic terms; (2) Their lives abound in behaviour with a psychical aspect; (3) There is in Animate Nature a prevalence of orderly systematization, balance and smooth working; (4) There is a pervasive beauty both hidden and revealed; (5) A very large proportion of the time and energy at the disposal of organisms is devoted to activities which make not for self-maintenance and self-aggrandisement, but for the continuance and welfare of the race. In fact, we find in Animate Nature far-reaching correspondences to the ideals of the True, the Beautiful and the Good."

This is an inspiring and a hopeful view. The conception of Animate Nature as a whole, based on the laws of physical, inanimate nature but rising above them by laws, qualities, impulses of its own, has been elaborated in this period, and owes its unity to the doctrine of evolution, the most characteristic, scientific, and philosophic achievement of the age. In Professor Thomson's treatment we see this dominating idea—of life as a whole—worked out with all the detail of modern research. "Each living thing is an individual, i.e. a complete unity in itself and yet each shares in the common activities which in their highest form we associate with the human race. Such a view gives both a solid basis and an

[1] Professor J. Arthur Thomson, "The System of Animate Nature."

infinite hope to mankind. The basis is natural law and a progress from simpler to higher forms throughout the living world as an incessant and eternal fact. The hope is the further realization of the ideals of Truth, Beauty and Goodness of which elements are to be found at every stage in the process."

It will be seen at once how close akin this philosophical idea is to many current notions in the social and political sphere. Bergson, who chiefly represents it in philosophy, is acclaimed as a leader by many in active life who follow a line of free development, vigorous activity, or even "anarchy." In philosophy and in active life the real issue, forced more and more into prominence in recent years, is the balance, somewhere and somehow to be found, between the unrestricted play of impulses and notions of every kind, and the control of the individual by common duties and supreme ideals.

We have seen, both in politics and in science, the need of such controlling ideas, and also their gradual emergence. We have noted the urgency of increasing their force both for mental breadth and stability and for the peaceful progress of mankind.

Social well-being, education and art, philosophy and religion, all present somewhat similar features. Social welfare falls properly to be mentioned next to science because, as the heralds of science predicted three hundred years ago, she has justified herself by the alleviation of suffering and by the increase both in the length and the healthiness of life and in the number of those who enjoy it.

We can only judge exactly of the progress made in health and general well-being during the time in which statistics have been taken and preserved. These begin with the census which was first taken in the first year of the nineteenth century. Public registration of births and deaths followed immediately after the first Reform Act. The Public Health Act of 1848 coincides with the Chartist demonstration which was the English equivalent for the French Socialist Second Republic. This Act constituted a supreme authority for

Public Health, which, having passed in the interval through the stage of the "Local Government Board," has just returned, since the War, to its original conception of a "Ministry of Health."

It will be noticed that the activity of the State in improving the health of its citizens began, as science itself began, by making measurements, and these measurements have all demonstrated an increase in vitality and a growing triumph for medicine. The growth of population, if life be a good thing and the numbers are not sufficient to interfere with its happiness, is surely a good thing also. The fall in the death-rate, the almost complete disappearance of certain virulent diseases and the mitigation of others, are a clear proof of healthier conditions. One fact alone—the saving of child life—is sufficient evidence of the greater care and the greater skill which medical science now demands and public opinion supports. Doctors had long regarded it as an ideal very difficult of attainment to bring the death-rate of the first year of life below one hundred in a thousand. It was ninety-two in 1916 and last year it was under eighty.

Medicine is the best example of unquestioned progress due to science, and, partly as a cause and partly as a result of this, we find medical men the most hopeful of the future and confident of their powers. Their science is the most perfect type of accurate and systematic knowledge applied to the good of man. It has, too, the high merit of encouraging us to expect similar results in political, social, and economic matters and to take steps to secure them. For we cannot divide man's nature into two quite separate and dissimilar parts and say that to one, viz. health, which is mental as well as physical, scientific treatment is applicable, but in the other, i.e. his activities as a citizen, no law can be detected and no remedial measures are possible. Our comparative failure in the latter sphere is due, not to any essential difference in the two cases, but to the fact that we have not yet applied our minds with the same zeal and determination to the task, and the task itself is even more difficult than that of medicine. Nor must we flatter ourselves that the task of

medicine is near its completion: in both regions we are only beginning our journey, but in medicine we are a little further ahead.

There have been ample signs recently of increased attention to economic, social, and international affairs, not from the point of view of supporting a party or pleading a case, but in the interest of accurate knowledge, which must be the foundation of any policy. Vesalius and the anatomists had to describe the body truly and Harvey to demonstrate its chief mechanical law before medicine could be constituted as a scientific art. Thus side by side with the League of Nations, the Institute for the Study of International Affairs has arisen, which aims simply at the study of international problems without direct advocacy of any kind. So in home affairs there are schools and courses of study on economic and social problems at all important educational centres. Twin difficulties beset them. One is the complexity of the questions involved, the other, the almost irresistible tendency to bias. In the 'forties and 'fifties David Urquhart was keeping in being one hundred and fifty Associations, mostly of working men, for the Study of Foreign Affairs. They were inspired by a passion for international justice and peace; but they flickered out, partly from want of a sufficient intellectual foundation in the members, partly because their leader, with all his high ideals, was himself the victim of violent prepossessions on the subjects of his study.

It is not that truth and justice are unattainable either in theory or practice in human affairs, but that we need a breadth and vigour of mind above the average to master the complexity of the problem with its infinite details and to reach the calm height from which they may be surveyed.

We reach therefore the educational aspect of recent progress. Assuming that our nature as a whole is capable of rising to the height that its advance on special lines demands, how is this to be secured and what has been done in these last years by education of all kinds to attain it?

Note that education in this sense is a far wider thing than the State schools and institutions which tend more and more

in ordinary parlance to monopolize the term. It must here at least be thought of as the deliberate effort of the more mature mind to train the less developed ; it must include all collective action of such kinds, and even more than this, the action of individuals over themselves in stretching out to a state of greater power and control over their own natures in the interest of a higher ideal. It will be understood at once therefore that education in this, the fullest sense, is sequent and not antecedent to advances of the human mind in making discoveries or altering the constitution of society. The pioneer explores and gains fresh light ; he criticizes old institutions and makes experiments in living. The educative process follows and aims at raising the whole man or the whole society to another level and accommodating its habitual response to new conditions and new stimulus.

This has been the case in the great social and intellectual changes which we have already noticed in this chapter. The democratic basis of government had virtually established itself in the West before the attempt began to educate all citizens to fill the position assigned to them in the new scheme of things. We may date this beginning in France and England from the 'thirties of the last century—Germany was earlier still—and each step in the extension of democracy has been followed by an extension of public education. The School Board Act of 1870 followed closely on the Reform Act of 1867. The Fisher Act of 1918 coincides with the latest and widest extension of the franchise. So with the growth of science and the introduction of science into the ordinary curriculum of all schools. All the greatest achievements in scientific discovery and the formulation of results had been settled and recognized before " science " as a subject made its appearance in school time-tables. We are now trying to digest into some sort of coherent and manageable mass the huge accretion of knowledge due to recent research, not with a view of teaching it all, but of so preparing a foundation for the young mind that it may enter later into the inheritance of the race, and become a full citizen of the nation and the world.

One is apt in such matters to see rather what one wants to see than the actual facts ; yet there can be little doubt that in Europe and the farther West the determination has steadily grown, and is now accepted by the governing minds in each community, that all young people should be as fully instructed as they are capable of being, and that it is part of the business of the State to assist, but not to control, such instruction, and to see that all attain at least such a minimum of knowledge as will enable them to go farther and to act intelligently as citizens. This is a new conclusion since the French Revolution, and to put it into force, both by voluntary and state agencies, is taxing, and will long tax, to the utmost the resources and the ingenuity of us all. One may discern emerging in the slowly forming system of education which we are trying to apply the same great ideas and principles which have appeared in European thought as a whole in the years preceding. Education is to be a freer thing than it was, giving scope to individual differences and initiative and imposing a less rigid authority and a less uniform routine. Herein we see the new conception of abundant and varied life. But this life is not to be unrestrained. It is to be subordinated, through a self-discipline suggested by more fully instructed minds, to an ideal of the general good with which we have to learn to identify our own. Herein is an old conception of service, newly adapted to our modern life, with a wider content than that of the old religious thinkers, and therefore more difficult to make as deep and intense as theirs.

And, for the content of the instruction, while we are here still in the experimental stage, one seems to see it turning gradually to another great conception of the last hundred years, that of development. The teaching of history, as an integral part of education, appeared in our schools side by side with the spread of democracy in the state. The former was a necessary foundation to the latter and a corrective to its possible excesses. To gain a firm footing in the present, and to look with hope towards the future, it is necessary to be conscious of progress achieved in the past and to be guided

by its lessons. The Arnolds, father and son, were for us in England two of the main channels for this spirit of education.

> Haply, the river of Time
> As it grows, as the towns on its marge
> Fling their wavering lights
> On a wider, statelier stream—
> May acquire, if not the calm
> Of its early mountainous shore,
> Yet a solemn peace of its own.
>
> And the width of the waters, the hush
> Of the grey expanse where he floats
> Freshening its current and spotted with foam
> As it draws to the Ocean, may strike
> Peace to the soul of the man on its breast—
> As the pale waste widens around him,
> As the banks fade dimmer away,
> As the stars come out, and the night wind
> Brings up the stream
> Murmurs and scents of the infinite sea.

It is seen then, at each step in our summary analysis, how Europe and the West, the vanguard of man's march to conquest of nature and of himself, has after unexampled triumphs, conflicts and growth, come in the latest years to the consciousness of a supreme need for stability, reconciliation and hopeful harmony, both in the individual mind and in society at large. When looking at work accomplished in almost every sphere, there is no cause for discouragement : there is abundant skill, eagerness and activity. But the highest qualities—the power of seeing things whole, the calmness of long views, the persistence of great efforts, the confidence of lifelong devotion—are at present less with us. Men sacrificed themselves freely and cheerfully in the war, but the world, as a whole, is less sure of anything, even of the rightness of their sacrifice, than they were of themselves. We need to collect our thoughts.

Art and literature in the latter part of the last century as compared with the earlier, give evidence of this. They are full of deep thought and passionate feeling ; they often have great beauty of expression and are ready to explore new tracts both of form and of experience ; but they do not attain the

grandeur of effort and the comprehensiveness of vision which were hoped for and sometimes reached by the earlier artists. We have seen no fellow to Beethoven or to Wordsworth in the later years.

The famous Preface to the Second Edition of the "Lyrical Ballads" in 1800 gives Wordsworth's high hopes for the future of poetry, and the sequel explains in some measure the nature and the causes of our disappointment. "The man of science seeks truth as a remote and unknown benefactor: the poet, singing a song in which all human beings join with him, rejoicing in the presence of truth as our visible friend and hourly companion. Poetry is the breath and finer spirit of all knowledge. . . . Emphatically may it be said of the Poet as Shakespeare hath said of man 'that he looks before and after.' . . . If the time should ever come when what is now called science, thus familiarized to men, shall be ready to put on, as it were, a form of flesh and blood, the poet will lend his divine spirit to aid the transfiguration and will welcome the Being thus produced as a dear and genuine inmate of the household of man."

It cannot be said that this time has yet come, though experiments have been made, and occasional fine things said, and an air of philosophic reflection has come upon much of the poetry and some of the prose fiction since Wordsworth's time. The "transfiguration" has not been accomplished. Knowledge in literature, as well as in its mechanical applications, has broken through the limits which would make it, for the present, the "dear and genuine inmate" of the house. It has still to be assimilated by education and tamed by morality before the ideal of the poet—a true and necessary ideal—comes near fulfilment. It is a work of synthesis, parallel to that which needs accomplishment and is being accomplished, in the social life of most civilized states and in the international life of the whole world.

The great writers of a hundred years ago, Goethe, and, a little later, Victor Hugo and Carlyle, had a titanic power of consuming the material which history, art, and science offered for their genius to transform. In recent years the material

has grown immeasurably, but the transforming genius has not appeared in equal force. The new direction of the century, however, is clearly marked in all the leading writers—the zeal for social reform, the humanitarian passion, in Dickens; the influence of science, the new philosophy of history, in George Eliot; the rise of women, the zest of life and nature, in George Meredith. While from Russia, the mysterious country which brings a breath of the East into European life, we have in her modern school of novelists perhaps the most perfect approach to the ideal of prose fiction in this period. They, especially Tolstoy, Turgeniev, and Dostoievsky, have a wider sweep of sympathy than any of their Western contemporaries and a marvellous imaginative power which makes their characters and incidents pieces of real life. And in them all there is that sure appreciation of greatness and goodness in the persons they portray, which is essential if art of any kind is to raise and fortify human nature.

A fresh and growing sense of beauty is one of the many hopeful signs of recent days. In such things there has been unquestioned gain since the early Victorian era. Ruskin and Morris stand out as prophets of a new spirit of joy in beauty and care in securing it. But they do not stand alone. In the last century there has been a general turning back from the conventionally approved and ornamental, to natural beauty and simplicity of taste, to the Primitives in art and building and living, as against the more artificial and imitative constructions of the Renascence and since.

In some cases the turn has been so great that the very element of beauty itself has been called in question, and men have advocated and attempted the wildest form of expression in the belief that individual expression, if it be genuine and deeply felt, is the one essential part. In this, as in so many aspects of recent thought, some sort of social synthesis is the corrective needed; and the remedy is happily growing in the same soil near by.

France and Italy have taken the lead lately in the philosophy of art and science and history. From them have come the Impressionists, the Futurists, and other innovators in painting;

from them, too, the most prominent living figures in philosophy—Bergson and Croce. With the death of Wundt in Germany the other day the last of the synthetic thinkers of the Victorian age passed away—the kindred of Kant, Hegel, Comte, and Spencer. The new synthesis is being sought by the co-operation of many minds, and we shall find in it the same elements as in society at large—vigorous life, experiment, and free expression on the one hand, and a growing sense of social unity and historical continuity on the other. It is in fact from the reconciliation of these two tendencies that salvation may be won. Bergson and Croce, though by no means sufficient to complete this work, are typical of its chief factors. Bergson has expressed more forcibly and picturesquely than anyone else the doctrine of the creation of living forms and thought by a persistent force. Life is the creator of life and the fullest human thought is the most perfectly free. Croce, steeped in history, as Bergson in biology, sees all present events as the unrolling of the human past and all history as contemporary history. Neither gains much for his system from the great structure of physical science, built up by the action and reaction of the mind and external nature since the beginning of thought. To Bergson indeed advance consists in constantly breaking down the systems which thought of the mathematical kind is constantly building up. Yet in France and in Italy the school of positive, or strictly scientific, thinkers is strong also. Durkheim, a recent loss, was in his time the leader in Europe of the new-found study of sociology, and laboured abundantly to demonstrate the evolution of ideas and institutions from simpler elements by ascertainable law.

Bergson and Durkheim thus represent the two poles which divide contemporary thought and which many well-balanced thinkers in all Western lands are endeavouring to bring into harmonious relation. France has, perhaps, done most in this rôle,[1] and it was a Frenchman who, just over a hundred years ago, saw more clearly than any of his contemporaries the line which religious development was to take in the

[1] See Parodi, "La Philosophie Contemporaine en France."

succeeding century. In 1797 Joseph de Maistre declared, that " every true philosopher must choose between these two hypotheses, either that a new religion is about to arise or that Christianity will renew its youth in some extraordinary manner." He saw the need and the possibility of either event ; he threw himself strongly into the support of the second ; he did not contemplate the joint arrival of both. Yet " the true philosopher " now reviewing European thought would surely conclude that something of both had occurred. Wesley, whose long life overlaps that of de Maistre, had initiated, in the eighteenth century, a spiritual revival, precursor to that which stirred the English Church in the nineteenth ; and the Tractarian movement was in turn inspired by the return to the past which was one of the leading notes of the Romantics. Later in the century, when the notion of development became predominant, it played its part within the Churches as well as without. Christianity, which to the typical Revolutionist was an effete and encumbering thing, ready to be cut down, took on fresh life, as de Maistre foresaw, and became to the evolutionist mind the growth of ages, developing as Western society itself developed, with its Greek and Oriental origins, its Roman organization, its democratic revolution and its final ideals of freedom and humanity in the nineteenth century.

In our own days the latter features become clearer and clearer, and all the Churches are looking out for means of union with one another similar to those which are to link the world in the League of Nations. We cannot here even glance at the questions of doctrine involved ; the question of vitality and general spirit can alone be touched on. The vitality of religion we may not judge only by the church statistics of established bodies : we must look outside to the vast and growing numbers of looser organizations—the Adult Schools, the Student Christians, the Christian Endeavour members—the multitudes enrolling themselves in a new and freer spirit under the Christian banner. " Authority " in the old Catholic sense they have not. But they differ from those who cultivate a religious sense without the Christian name,

in looking back to a definite religious tradition and a personal Divine and human Founder. If this divides them from the hosts of others, Buddhists, Confucians, Mahometans, who have another tradition and name another prophet, it is a source of strength and unity within their own ranks. Their universal purpose is service, control and devotion of themselves to the interests of others, and in all cases they have no limit to the sphere of their benevolent activity but mankind. They rank also the cultivation of the mind as part of their human duty, and thus come into relation with the general intellectual movement of the age.

But it is impossible to ignore the large number of those who would not subscribe to any creed or accept any one Superhuman Teacher, and yet are acting in their own way a religious part. Men of this kind, Positivists, Ethicists, and the like, definitely organized in religious bodies, in any Western country, are very few, and many would deny that in this shape a "new religion," as de Maistre imagined possible, has arisen. But to the broader view it will seem right to extend the term "religious" to all those who have a definite non-selfish object to which they devote their lives, and in this sense Socialism, Science, or Art may become a religion.

Are there not some clear common elements which have become prominent in all forms of true religious activity in these later years? It will be accepted by most men that there are, and that they are identical with the leading tendencies in general thought and life; for the real religion of any age is the synthesis which binds its life and thought together. In our time this new synthesis is in the making, but we may already discern some of its traits. It is social and human in the widest sense, looking to an immemorial social growth for the sanction of its beliefs and its precepts, and to the good of all mankind for the object of its action. Such a basis is common ground for all current belief, whether Christian, Theistic, Pantheistic, or Humanist. All current Western religion includes also some form of a belief in progress, for all religious men in the West now believe that either by

Divine will or human activity, or both combined, the world has grown to be something better than it was, and is capable of still further betterment. But to this belief religion of any order adds, that the betterment is conditional on effort, and that men must make this effort in accordance with the leading of Something outside and above the individual will. It may be the prompting of a personal God ; it may be the immanent working of a Divine Will ; it may be the Human Spirit rising from the abysses of an infinite past. However he presents it to himself, the religious man finds somewhere beyond his own will a greater thing to which he bows, and by the strength of which he grows himself in stature and promise.

In la sua volontade è nostra pace. Modern religion accepts and re-interprets the words of Dante. Our peace is the end—harmony, that is, between our desires and the dictates of reason within us, and harmony without between all who make up the human community. And this peace is to be found by the exercise of a will, which is not merely individual, but is part of, and subordinate to, a greater will, the greatest and highest which each type of religious mind can conceive.

In such a conception—action towards a common harmony and good, devotion to, and guidance by, the highest known inspiration—it would seem that all forms of religion in the modern Western world are being gradually reconciled.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF REPRESENTATIVE MEN AND MOVEMENTS

I. ANCIENT

HELLENIC.			HEBRAIC.			ROMAN.		
B.C. Before 1500	Early Ægæan, Cretan and Mycenæan.	B.C. Before 1500	B.C. Before 1500	Age of the Patriarchs.	B.C. Before 1500	B.C. Before 1500	Latin tribes, among others, settling in Italy.	B.C. Before 1500
	Homeric Greeks.	c. 1300			c. 1200			
	Loose Kingship.	–1000?		Age of the Judges.	–1000?			
c. 1300 –800?	Bloom of Epic Poetry. Homer, Iliad and Odyssey.		c. 1200 –800?	Oral Prophecy and a new Script.				
	Dorian Invasion.	c. 1130 –1000		Kingship established.	c. 1000 –750		Founding of Rome (traditional date)	753
	Colonization. Cities.	c. 900		Judæa and Israel divided.				
	Kingship given up.	–750						
c. 750 –600	First bloom of Lyric Poetry: Tyrtaeus, Sappho (fl. 610).		c. 760 –600	Written Prophecy. Amos, Isaiah of Jerusalem and Jeremiah (fl. 610).			Early Kings. Rome and the Etruscans.	753 –509
c. 600 –500	Science and Philosophy: Thales, Xenophanes, Pythagoras, Heracleitus, Parmenides.			Exile in Babylon. Return under Cyrus of Persia. Kingship given up.	c. 596 –536		Expulsion of the Kings. Republic established.	

HELLENIC.			HEBRAIC.			ROMAN.		
B.C.		B.C.	B.C.		B.C.	B.C.		B.C.
			c. 550 –500 ?	Ezekiel, the second Isaiah, the Book of Job.				
	The struggle with Persia.	c. 500 –480		Jews under Persia.	c. 500 –333		Struggle between the Patricians and Plebeians. The Plebeians win.	c. 500 –366
	Headship of Athens.	c. 480 –431						
	Peloponnesian War.	431–404						
c. 500 –375	Bloom of classic culture, Pindar, Æschylus, Sophocles, Anaxagoras the philosopher, Pericles the statesman, Herodotus, Euripides, Socrates, Ictinus (architect of the Parthenon), Pheidias, Hippocrates the father of medicine, Aristophanes, Thucydides, Xenophon, Democritus.		c. 500 –333	Rule of the Law of the Priests. Minor Prophets.				
							The Republic masters the Italian peninsula, defeating Gauls and subduing Samnites.	c. 400 –275
	Philip of Macedon menaces, and his son Alexander masters Greece.	c. 357–323		Jews under Alexander. Welcomed at Alexandria.	333–323			

HELLENIC.			HEBRAIC.			ROMAN.		
B.C.–A.D.		B.C.–A.D.	B.C.–A.D.		B.C.–A.D.	B.C.–A.D.		B.C.–A.D.
c. 375 –300	Last bloom of classic culture. Praxiteles, Demosthenes, Aristotle.							
c. 300 –A.D.	Epicurus, Euclid, Zeno and Cleanthes (founders of Stoicism), Theocritus, Archimedes, Polybius, Hipparchus the astronomer.			Jews under the successors of Alexander.	c. 323 –A.D.		The Republic struggles with and destroys Carthage; conquers Spain; dominates Greece and Asia Minor.	c. 264 –140
	Portrait sculpture.			Maccabean Revolt. Precarious revival of Jewish monarchy. Jews come under Rome.		c. 250 –150	Plautus, Ennius, and Terence.	
	Minor Poetry.		c. 300 –A.D.	Ecclesiastes. Daniel. Growth of Pharisaism.			Abuse of power. Partial reform, reaction and revolt. The Gracchi, Marius and Sulla, Pompey and Julius Cæsar. The Empire. Augustus.	150 –14 A.D.
				Life and Death of Jesus Christ.	A.D.–30 A.D.			

Hellenic.		Hebraic and Christian.			Roman.		
					c. 100 B.C.–25 A.D.	Bloom of Roman Literature: Lucretius, Catullus, Cicero, Cæsar, Virgil, Horace, Livy.	
A.D.–200	Plutarch, Epictetus, Ptolemy the astronomer, Galen the physician.	A.D. c. 54–64	Work of St. Paul.			Nero. First Persecution of the Christians.	A.D. 54–68
			Fall of Jerusalem.	A.D. 70			
		c. 68–150 ?	The Apocalypse. The Gospels. The Second Book of Esdras.			Stabilizing of the Empire and organization of the Law under Trajan, Hadrian, Antoninus Pius, and Marcus Aurelius.	98–180
					c. 68–180	Age of "Silver Latin": Tacitus, Juvenal, Apuleius.	
fl. 242	Plotinus.	c. 200–300	Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, Origen, Athanasius, St. Anthony the hermit.			Menace of the barbarians increasing (N.E.). The army predominant.	c. 180–284
						Diocletian makes the Empire despotic and bureaucratic.	284–305

A.D.		A.D.
306–337	Constantine the Great, Emperor. He recognizes Christianity. He founds Constantinople.	c. 306–337
	The Goths cross the Danube.	376
	Theodosius the Great, Emperor.	379–395
	Virtual division of the Empire into East and West.	395
	Alaric the Visigoth captures Rome.	410
fl. 413	St. Augustine, Bishop of Hippo.	
	Attila the Hun.	c. 451–453
	Genseric the Vandal.	455
	End of the Roman Empire in the West.	476

II. MEDIÆVAL

c. 450	St. Patrick converts Ireland.	
	Teuton Franks settle in Gaul; Teuton Angles, Saxons and Jutes in Britain.	c. 450–500
	Theodoric the Ostrogoth in Italy.	489–526
	Justinian revises and consolidates the Roman Law. His generals drive the Goths out of Italy.	527–565
c. 450–550	Bloom of Byzantine Art.	
b. 480 d. 543	St. Benedict.	
	The Lombards invade Italy.	568
	Pope Gregory the Great.	590–604
c. 597	St. Augustine, the Benedictine monk, lands in Kent.	
622	Mohammed's flight from Mecca to Medina (the Hĕgĭra).	
	The Arabs conquer in Asia Minor, Persia, Africa, Spain, but are defeated in Gaul by Charles Martel, the Frank.	c. 632–732
c. 700–800	They show power in architecture, and begin to study Greek science and philosophy.	
768–814	Charlemagne supports the Pope against the Lombards. He is crowned Emperor at Rome (800). He fosters learning and poetry.	768–814
	Treaty of Verdun, dividing his dominions into three parts.	843
c. 600–850	New beginnings of Heroic Poetry. Traces in the *Elder Edda*, *Beowulf*, the *Nibelungenlied*, the saga of *Deirdre*, the *Chanson de Roland*.	
	Definite emergence of Feudalism.	c. 800–900
	Raids of the Northmen in France, Germany, the British Isles, Sicily, etc.	c. 800–1000
	Traditional date of Rurik the Norseman in Russia.	862

A.D.		A.D.
871–901	Alfred the Great. His work for freedom and culture.	871–901
	Henry the Fowler King over the German Duchies.	918
	Otto the Great crowned Emperor at Rome.	962
	Hugh Capet in Paris.	987
	The Normans settle in Sicily.	c. 1040–1090
	William the Norman in England.	1066–1087
	Quarrel between Hildebrand (Gregory VII) and Henry IV, Emperor.	1075–1085
	The First Crusade.	1096
	Frederick Barbarossa, Emperor.	1152–1190
	National unity in England under Henry II.	1154–1189
	Emergence of the cities as centres of freedom. Slavery disappearing.	c. 1100–1200
c. 850–1200	First bloom of Mediæval Architecture: Lombard; Byzantine and Romanesque in Italy; Romanesque in France, England, Germany.	
c. 1075–1200	Literature: Final form of the *Chanson de Roland*. The Romances. The Fabliaux. Provençal Troubadours. Final form of the *Nibelungenlied*. The Minnesingers. Villehardouin. Icelandic Sagas.	
c. 1100–1200	Arab learning at Cordova. Averroës.	
c. 1100–1200	Christian Theology: Abelard, St. Bernard, St. Dominic, St. Francis. Innocent III and the Albigensian "Crusade."	
	Magna Charta in England.	1215
	Mongol-Tartar invasion and subjection of Russia.	c. 1224–1243
c. 1212–1250	Frederick II, Emperor. His struggles with the Papacy and the cities. He fosters culture.	c. 1212–1250
	Rudolph of Hapsburg, Emperor. Rise of Austria.	1273–1292
	Parliaments of Edward I.	1275–1295
	"Great Privilege" of Aragon.	1283
	Philippe IV and the States-General.	1302
	Germ of the Swiss Confederation.	1307
	The Popes go to Avignon.	1308
c. 1200–1300	Theology and Thought: Albertus Magnus, Thomas Aquinas, Roger Bacon.	
c. 1200–1400	Bloom of Gothic Architecture.	
c. 1225–1350	First bloom of Italian Art: Niccolo Pisano, Cimabue, Giotto.	
c. 1275–1375	First bloom of Italian Literature: Dante, Petrarch, Boccaccio, Marsiglio of Padua (writing in Latin).	

A.D.		A.D.
c. 1275–1375	German Mysticism: Eckhard, the *Theologia Germanica*. Cf. Jan Ruysbroeck in Flanders.	
c. 1300–1400	English Literature: Wycliffe, Chaucer, Langland.	
	The Peasants' Rising in France.	1358
	The Peasants' Rising in England.	1381
	The "Hundred Years' War" and Jeanne d'Arc.	1338–1453
	The Turks take Constantinople.	1453
	Wars of the Roses in England.	1455–1485
	Louis XI re-organizes France.	1461–1483
	Mary of Burgundy marries Maximilian of Hapsburg.	1477
	Ivan the Great shakes off the Tartar domination.	1462–1505
	Germany without strong central government.	c. 1400–1500
	Italy without central government.	c. 1300–1500
	Italian despots and their struggles.	
	Florence and Venice republican.	
c. 1375–1500	Literature and Thought. Germany: Thomas à Kempis, Nicholas of Cues. Invention of Printing. France: Froissart, Commines, Villon. England: Malory.	
c. 1375–1500	Bloom of Art in Italy (Florence and Venice leaders): Brunelleschi and early "Renaissance" building, Donatello, Fra Angelico, Masaccio, Piero della Francesca, Botticelli, Mantegna, the Bellinis. (Cp. the van Eycks and Memling in Flanders and the Primitives in France.)	

III. RENAISSANCE

c. 1485–1525	Discovery of the New World: Bartolommeo Diaz, Columbus, Vasco da Gama, Cortez.	
	Ferdinand of Aragon and Isabella of Castile. Expulsion of the Jews. Revival of the Inquisition.	1471–1504
	Charles V, Emperor.	1519–1558
c. 1500–1600	The Reformation: Luther, Zwingli, Erasmus, Sir Thomas More, Calvin.	
	The Peasants' Rising in Germany.	1525
	The German "Reception" of Roman Law.	c. 1475–1550
	French, Spanish and Austrian invasions of Italy.	c. 1494–1559

A.D.		A.D.
c. 1509–1603	England decides for the Reformation (Henry VIII to Elizabeth).	c. 1509–1603
	Ivan the Terrible. Serfdom increases in Russia.	1533–1584
	Wars of Religion in France. Compromise of Henri IV.	c. 1559–1598
	Spanish oppression in the Netherlands. Rise of the Dutch Republic.	c. 1559–1609
c. 1475–1600	The last bloom of Italian Literature and Art: Machiavelli, Ariosto, Tasso, Leonardo da Vinci, Michael Angelo, Giorgione, Titian, Raphael, Correggio, Tintoretto, Veronese. (Cp. Dürer and Holbein in Germany, Brueghel in Flanders.) Palestrina, the king of sixteenth century music.	
c. 1500–1600	Renaissance and Reaction in Spain: Ignatius Loyola, St. Teresa, Cervantes, El Greco, Servetus.	
c. 1500–1600	The Renaissance in France: Rabelais, Marot, Ronsard, Montaigne, the Huguenot writers.	
c. 1550–1625	The Renaissance in England: Spenser, Marlowe, Shakespeare, Beaumont and Fletcher, Ben Jonson, Hooker, the translators of the Bible, Francis Bacon.	
	English expansion overseas: First charter of East India Co., Settlement in Virginia, Landing of Pilgrim Fathers.	c. 1600–1625
c. 1543–1650	The Awakening in Science: Copernicus, Vesalius, Galileo, Kepler, Harvey.	
	The Thirty Years' War in Germany.	1618–1648
	Richelieu and Absolutism in France.	1624–1642
	Charles I, the Commonwealth and Cromwell, the Restoration, James II and the Revolution.	1625–1688
c. 1625–1688	English Literature and Thought: Donne, Hobbes, Herrick, Sir Thomas Browne, Milton, Harrington, Jeremy Taylor, Vaughan, George Fox, Bunyan.	
c. 1600–1688	Last bloom of Spanish culture: Calderon, Velazquez. (Cp. the Fleming Rubens and the Frenchman Poussin.)	
c. 1600–1688	Holland: Grotius, Rembrandt.	
	Louis XIV in France.	1643–1715
	England leads the combination against Louis to the Peace of Utrecht.	1689–1713
c. 1600–1700	"The Augustan Age" in French Literature: Corneille, La Rochefoucauld, La Fontaine, Pascal, Mme. de Sevigné, Molière, Saint-Simon, Racine.	

IV. MODERN

A.D.		A.D.
c. 1600–1700	Advance in Science and Mathematics: Descartes, Pascal, Boyle, Huygens, Newton, Leibnitz.	
c. 1600–1700	Rise of Modern Philosophy: Descartes, Spinoza, Locke, Leibnitz.	
c. 1650–1789	English Literature and Art: Dryden, Christopher Wren, De Foe, Swift, Congreve, Addison, Pope, Richardson, Fielding, Johnson, Sterne, Smollett, Goldsmith. Hogarth, Reynolds, Gainsborough. Thinkers and Reformers: Berkeley, John Wesley, Hume, Adam Smith, John Howard, Chatham, Burke, Gibbon.	
c. 1713–1789	Pre-Revolutionary Criticism in France: Montesquieu, Voltaire, Rousseau, Diderot, and the Encyclopædists.	
c. 1689–1789	Russia under Peter the Great.	1689–1725
	Russia under Catherine the Great.	1729–1796
1740–1786	Prussia under Frederick the Great. Frederick fosters education and culture.	1740–1786
	First Partition of Poland.	1772
	Expansion of England oversea (from Treaty of Utrecht to Peace of Paris).	c. 1713–1763
	Rise of the United States. Washington and the Declaration of Independence.	1763–1776
	The French Revolution.	1789–1795
	Rise and Fall of Napoleon.	c. 1795–1815
c. 1700–1832	German music: Bach, Handel, Gluck, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert.	
c. 1750–1832	German Philosophy and Literature: Kant, Lessing, Goethe, Schiller, Fichte, Hegel.	
c. 1750–1832	Romanticism and Realism in England: Burns, Blake, Wordsworth, Walter Scott, Coleridge, Jane Austen, Charles Lamb, Byron, Shelley, Keats. Jeremy Bentham, Malthus, Carlyle (young). (For painting see below.)	
c. 1760–1832	Advance in Science: Herschel, Laplace, Jenner, Lavoisier, Volta, Lamarck, Dalton.	
	Industry in England: Spinning-jennies, power-looms, new smelting processes, steam-engines, changes in agriculture; "Industrial Revolution."	c. 1760–1832
	Political and Social Changes:	c. 1800–1918
	England: Reaction and Reform, "Act of Union" with Ireland, "Peterloo," Robert Owen's Socialist experiments, Rise of Trades-Unionism, Reform Bill (1832), Factory Acts, Poor Law, Beginning of Local Government, Co-operative Pioneers, Repeal of Corn Laws.	Before 1870
	Settlement in Australia, Self-Government in Canada, Expansion in India, Indian Mutiny, Dissolution of East India Co.	

A.D.		A.D.
	Forster's Education Act, Advance of Trades-Unionism, Extensions of Franchise, Women's Movement, Irish Home Rule, Labour Party.	c. 1870–1918
	Great expansion overseas (Colonies and Protectorates).	
	The Great War.	
	France: Reaction, revolt and reform. Return of the Bourbons and their final expulsion. Utopian speculations. Second Republic. Louis Napoleon. War with Prussia. Commune. Third Republic.	c. 1815–1870
	Payment of German indemnity. Advance of Socialist Party. Boulanger episode. Dreyfus Affair.	c. 1870–1918
	Colonial expansion. Alliance with Russia.	
	The Great War.	
	Germany: Revival during Napoleonic war. Work for education (Humboldt, Froebel). Movements for unity and liberation. "Year of Revolutions," 1848. Parliament at Frankfort. Prussia's opposition. Bismarck. Austro-Prussian War. Franco-Prussian War. King of Prussia German Emperor.	c. 1800–1870
	Great expansion of wealth, industry, population. Colonial experiments. Building of navy. The Great War. Overthrow of the monarchy and establishment of a Republic.	1870–1918
	Italy: Impulse towards unity given by Napoleon. War of Liberation under Mazzini and Garibaldi. The short-lived Roman Republic (1848). Cavour, Victor Emmanuel. Renewed war (1858). Italy united under the Piedmontese monarchy. Triple Alliance. Entry into the Great War.	c. 1800–1918
	Russia: Movement for reform. Alexander II emancipates the serfs. Reaction and Nihilism. "Industrial Revolution." Crimean War. War with Turkey. Expansion in Far and Near East. Alliance with France. Renewed reform movements. The Duma and reaction. The Great War. First and Second Revolutions (1917). The "Dictatorship of the Proletariat."	c. 1800–1918
	Greece and the Balkans: Greece freed from Turkey (Navarino, 1827). Rise of Bulgaria, Serbia, Roumania (San Stefano, 1878). First and Second Balkan Wars (1912, 1913). The Great War.	c. 1800–1918
	America: Peace with England and disarmament. Civil war and abolition of negro slavery. Expansion of industry, wealth, and population. Monroe doctrine. Entry into the Great War.	c. 1800–1918
	The Peace of Versailles and the League of Nations.	1919

A.D.		A.D.
	Increased Invention and Industry: Railroads, steamships, telegraphs, telephones, torpedoes, submarines, aeroplanes, poison-gas.	c. 1832–1918
c. 1832–1918	Science.—Physics: Faraday, Helmholtz, Kelvin, Clerk-Maxwell, Mendeleeff; Discovery of Röntgen rays and of radium. Medicine: Discovery of anæsthetics, Claude Bernard, Florence Nightingale, Pasteur, Lister, Koch, Virchow, Metchnikoff. Discovery of malaria bacillus. Geology and Biology: Lyell, Darwin, Mendel, Huxley. Mathematics: Gauss, Lobachevsky, Riemann, Einstein.	
c. 1832–1918	Philosophy: Schopenhauer, Comte, Herbert Spencer, Lotze, T. H. Green, Bradley, Bergson.	
c. 1800–1918	Literature, Art, and General Thought:	
	England: Carlyle, Macaulay, J. H. Newman, Tennyson, Browning, J. S. Mill, Thackeray, Dickens, the Brontës, George Eliot, Kingsley and the Christian Socialists, Ruskin, Huxley, M. Arnold, Meredith, the Rossettis, W. Morris, Swinburne, Thomas Hardy.	
c. 1800–1918	France: Balzac, Victor Hugo, George Sand, Flaubert, Baudelaire, Renan, Zola, Verlaine, Guy de Maupassant.	
	Germany: Heine, the brothers Grimm (fairy-tales and philology), Baur, Strauss (Biblical criticism), Ranke, Mommsen, Treitschke, Karl Marx, Nietzsche.	
	Italy: Mazzini, Leopardi, d'Annunzio, Croce.	
	Russia: Pushkin, Turgenev, Dostoievsky, Tolstoy, Tchehov.	
	America: Emerson, Poe, Whitman, William James, Henry James.	
	Norway: Ibsen.	
c. 1800–1918	Painting: Goya, Ingres, Turner, Constable, Delacroix, Corot, Rousseau, Millet, the English Pre-Raphaelites, Monet, Whistler, Manet, Degas, Cézanne, Renoir, Gauguin, Vincent van Gogh.	
c. 1832–1918	Music: Schumann, Wagner, Brahms, Strauss, Chopin, Borodin, Moussorgsky, Tschaikovsky, Scriabin.	

(Note.—As a rule the names of living men have been omitted.)

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